pret. 4s.

SIX

SERMONS

PREACHED

By the Right Reverend Father in God,

SETH

Lord Bishop of *SARUM.*

Printed for James Collins at the Kings Arms in Ludgate street.

LONDON:

Printed by *Andrew Clark*, for *James Collins*, at the Kings Arms in *Ludgate-street*. 1678.

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A

Againſt

RESISTANCE

OF

Lawful Powers.

A

SERMON

Preached before the

KING at *White-Hall*,

Novemb. v. 1661.

LONDON:

Printed by *A. C.* for *John Martyn*, and are to be ſold by *James Collins* at the Kings Arms in *Ludgate-ſtreet*.

UMI

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Againſt Reſiſtance of Lawful Powers.

ROM. xiii. 2.

And they that reſiſt, ſhall receive to themſelves damnation.

AMongſt all the ſtratagems of the Devil, tending to the undermining of Religion, and the ſubverſion of the ſouls of men,

though there cannot be any more unreasonable, yet there was never any more unhappily successful, than the creating and fomenting an Opinion in the World, That Religion is an enemy to Government, and the bringing Sincerity and Zeal in Religion into jealousie, and disgrace with the Civil Powers.

It was by this jealousie, blown into the heads of the High Priests, and the Sanhedrim amongst the Jews, and of *Herod*, and *Pontius Pilate*, that Christ himself (the *Captain of our Salvation*, the *Author and Finisher of our Faith*) was accused, condemned, and executed on a Tree. By this the Apostles were haled before the Governours of Provinces, forced from one City to flee unto another: for this they endured bonds, and imprisonment, and sundry kinds of death. It was through

through this fancy, that the Christians, for three hundred years together, endured the rage of Heathen Emperours; *being destitute, afflicted, and tormented.* Our Lord Christ was traduced as *an enemy to Cæsar*, a man refractary to the Roman Laws, and a Nonconformist to the Religion, and Laws of his Country. The Apostles were charged as disturbers of the publick peace, with *turning the world upside down.* The Primitive Christians were accounted enemies to the Commonwealth, adverse, and malevolent to the Empire: and the Christian Religion it self was bruited, and surmised to have something in it offensive, and dangerous to the Civil Government; as appears not only by the Edicts of Heathen Emperours, but also by the Apologies of *Clemens Alexandrinus, Ju-*

stin Martyr, Tertullian, Athenagoras, &c.

Neither was it thus only of old, before the *Roman* Empire was become Christian; but even since the time of *Constantine*, down to our Fathers days, nay to our own, we shall find the Devil still managing the same pretence, carrying on the same Antichristian mystery of iniquity, which began to work in the time of our Lord Christ, and his Apostles.

Those, that profess to know the *Arcana Imperii*, and publickly proclaim themselves to the World to be qualified for Molders of Commonwealths, and Dictatours to Princes, are the Writers of Politicks; *Machiavel* abroad, and others nearer home: some of these, pretending discoveries of things unknown to all our Fathers, if they be strictly

ſtrictly analyſed, will be found to reſolve their whole myſtery into this one pretence, That Religion, in the height and exaltation of it, is prejudicial to Policy; and that, to be a thorow-paced, a ſincere and zealous Chriſtian, is to be dangerous to the State.

As the remedy for which evil, they have thought fit and neceſſary to enervate the Principles of all Religion ſo far, as to remove the Doctrine of Good and Evil, the Immortality of the Soul, the Rewards and Puniſhments of the World to come; that ſo Religion may appear wholly to derive from Policy.

How deſtructive theſe Doctrines are, not only to the ſouls of men, in reference to the World to come; but to the intereſts of this life, (the regular and ſecure acquiſition and

enjoyment whereof, are entirely derived from the great and everlasting Ordinance of Government) I am not now called to speak. But surely it cannot be unnecessary to endeavour to state this Question, to search into the grounds of this pretence, to examine thorowly from whence all this clamour, these fears and jealousies; whence all this mighty scandal hath arisen.

The Gospel of our Saviour is not like the Alcoran, which hates the light, and abhors a strict examination of the Principles whereon it stands. When the Jews contended with our Saviour, and opposed his Doctrine, he desired to bring the matter in question to a rational decision, *John* x. The Question there was, Whether he were the Son of God? And he propounds them this fair κειτήριον, Verse

37.

37. *If I do the works of my Father, believe me: if I do not, believe me not.*

And I verily, as a Minister of Christ, (though the meanest of ten thousand) am bold in the power, and through the evidence of the truth of the Gospel, to say, Let the Adversaries of Religion search and look; let them employ their Wit, their Industry, their Logick, if any thing can be found in the Principles of Christianity, prejudicial to the power of just and lawful Magistrates: Nay moreover, if it be possible for Men or Angels to state the Rights of Civil Government upon clearer and firmer Principles, to secure them by more powerful Obligations, to urge them upon men by more efficacious Motives of Rewards and Punishments, than those are, which the very Founda-

tions of Christianity do expresly propound: then let the Gospel, and the Ministers of it, endure all that contempt and obloquy which these men desire to cast upon them.

And for the Foundations of our Religion; there are those, that tell us, that Christianity is founded upon *Cephas*, (*which is*, indeed, *by interpretation a Stone*) but the Apostle tells us, (*Ephes.* ii. 20.) that we *are built upon the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone*: wherefore by these the present Question is to be decided.

If any men, at any time, taking upon them the sacred name of *Christians*, have swerved from the Rule of their Profession, and (acting contrary to the Spirit of Christ) have made that holy Name to be blasphemed; it is reason that they be

be esteemed the utter enemies of Christianity, and that they themselves should bear their condemnation: but to charge their exorbitancies upon that Profession which they have prophaned and injured, is such an injustice, as cannot consist with moral honesty, or Philosophical ingenuity.

So then, *hic Rhodus, hic saltus.* As Saint *Paul* (1 *Cor.* xv. 14, 17, 20.) concerning the Resurrection of Christ, *If Christ be not risen, our preaching is vain, and your faith is vain:* —— *but now is Christ risen:* so I; If, within the compass of those Foundations, which I have mentioned, be found any colour or shadow of license for any person whatsoever, upon any pretence whatsoever, to entrench upon the power of lawful Magistrates; if any warrant at all for open Rebellion,

lion, or privy Conspiracies; for murthering or deposing of Princes, or absolving Subjects from their Allegiance: then let *Kings* cease to be our *Nursing Fathers*, and *Queens* to be our *Nursing Mothers*; let *David look to his own house*; let the *Light of our Eyes*, the *Breath of our Nostrils*, the Restorer of Religion, the Defender of our Faith, look rather first to defend himself. It will then be reasonable to expect, that the *Kings of the earth* should *stand up*, and * *the Rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his Christ*, that they should *break their bonds in sunder, and cast their cords from them*: then *our Preaching is vain*, and *your Faith is vain*.

* Psal. ii. 2

But now indeed the case is otherwise, and that evidently. What the Laws of men could never do with all their Temporal Rewards

and

and Punishments, *in that they are weak*; that Christianity, in the true Spirit of it, performs, to the utmost height that is conceiveable.

The Foundation of Government and Obedience, is deeply and firmly rooted in the Foundation of our Religion. And, if *the Scripture cannot be broken*, if it be true, that *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before one jot of it shall pass away*: it is as true, that the *Ordinances of the Sun and Moon* shall fail, before this Ordinance shall be dissolved. For if by the Principles of our Religion we are obliged to believe concerning the Books of the Old Testament, that they have been delivered by *holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the holy Ghost*, 2 Pet. i. 21. then the holy Ghost hath said, *By me Kings reign*, &c. Prov. viii. 15. If Christ be the Son

of

of God, the Son of God hath said, *Render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsars*; Mat. xxii. 21. If the Holy Spirit did overshadow *Peter*, and the rest of the Apostles; then *Peter*, overshadowed and filled with the Spirit, commands us in the Name of God to *submit our selves to every Ordinance of man*, 1 Pet. ii. 13. If Saint *Paul* were called to be an Apostle by the miraculous appearance of our Lord Christ after his Ascension, and was by him immediately instructed in the pure and genuine Spirit of Christianity; then Saint *Paul's* Theory concerning Government is an authentick Christian Theory, whereby the Doctrines and practises of Christians are to be judged: and that Theory is delivered in the seven first Verses of this Chapter, *Let every soul be subject to the higher Powers*, &c.

&c. *And they that reſiſt, ſhall receive to themſelves damnation.*

I call it a Chriſtian Theory of Government, becauſe it is a brief and comprehenſive Scheme, whereby all Queſtions concerning Obedience and Government, may, according to Chriſtian Principles, be reſolved.

The whole diſcourſe of the Apoſtle conſiſteth of two general parts;

Firſt, A ſtrict Injunction.
Secondly, Effectual Motives.

Firſt, The Injunction in the firſt words, *Let every ſoul be ſubject to the higher Powers*, &c.

Secondly, The Motives in the words following, which are taken from

I. The Original and Inſtitution of Government; it is *ordained of God*: hence follows

II. The

II. The Sinfulness of Resistance; *They resist the Ordinance of God.* And

III. The Danger of it; *They shall receive damnation.* Which is again enforced by

IV. The End of Government in respect of evil and good men.

Out of all which follows

V. The necessity of subjection; *Wherefore ye must needs be subject.* And

VI. The nature of that necessity; it is not of prudence, but of *Conscience.*

After all which the Apostle (like a legitimate Demonstratour) resumes his Proposition, and concludes it with an ὅπερ ἔδει ποιῆσαι, Verse 7. *Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute* is due, *custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour.*

The

The words, which I have choſen, contain in them the danger of reſiſtance to the Civil Powers. They relate both to the Antecedent and Subſequent part of the Apoſtle's Diſcourſe, and are as efficacious towards the preſſing of the Injunction of Obedience, as it is poſſible for words to expreſs, or men to conceive.

The ſtrongeſt, and moſt operative Arguments upon men (at leaſtwiſe — ὅτι νῦν βροτοί εἰσιν) are Arguments of terrour. The moſt terrible thing within the compaſs of humane apprehenſion, is Damnation; which imports, beſides the judgments of this life, the eternal privation of the enjoyment of God, *utter darkneſs*, and *everlaſting burnings*.

Thoſe that reſiſt, ſhall receive to themſelves damnation.

Thoſe

Expl. *Those that resist*] ἀνθεστηκότες. Resistance is a Relative Act, and it implies some person or thing to be resisted. What then is the Correlate of ἀνθεστηκότες?

That is delivered in the first Verse, *Those that resist* ἐξουσίαις ὑπερεχούσαις, *the Authorities set over them*, Civil Authorities having *jus Gladii*, the Authorities supreme, or subordinate, justly obtaining over them. It is not Δύναμις, or κράτος, which is here used, (which signifie corporal strength and power) but ἐξουσία, which the Scripture distinguisheth from both the other. From Δύναμις, *Luke* iv. 36. and ix. 1. 1 *Cor.* xv. 24. *Ephes.* i. 21. from κράτος, *Jude* 25. It answers the *Hebrew* word משלה, which the *Septuagint* translates by all the names of Legal Authority; ἀρχὴ, βασιλεία, στρατεία, κυρία, δυναστεία, οἰκονομία. It is taken for the

the Perſons of Governours, as well as for their Power: ſo *Epheſ.* iii. 10. *That to Principalities and Powers* (πᾶσι ἀρχαῖς, καὶ πᾶσι ἐξουσίαις) *might be known*, &c. and πρὸς τὰς ἐξουσίας, καὶ τὰς κοσμοκράτορας, *againſt Powers, and the Rulers of this World*, Epheſ. vii. 2. So that we may not ſeparate their Perſonal and their Politick capacity.

It remains, that we enquire the meaning of ἀνθιστάμενοι, and ἀντιτασσόμενοι, what it is to reſiſt in the Language of the Goſpel. Now,

1. That to oppoſe by force is to reſiſt, it is ſo plain, that I need not ſpeak to it. We meet both the words in that ſence, *James* iv. 6, 7. Κύριος ὑπερηφάνοις ἀντιτάσσεται, *God reſiſteth the proud*; and ἀντίστητε τῷ διαβόλῳ, *Reſiſt the Devil.*

2. But the word ſignifies *Oppoſition by ſubtilty*, as well as *by force.* The Oppoſition of *Elymas* the Sor-

cerer to Saint *Paul*, is expressed by this word, *Act.* xii 8. ἀθίσαν· and the opposition of *Jannes* and *Jambres* to *Moses*, ἀνθίστανται, 2 *Tim.* iv. 15.

3. And lastly, it signifies opposition by Words, as well as by Deeds. So ἀντεῖν, ἢ ἀντεῖναι, *to gainsay*, and *to resist*, are the same, *Luke* xxi. 15. and ἀντεῖναι is *to contradict*, Acts vi. 10.

The words then do clearly and plainly comprehend all manner of resistance or opposition.

This hitherto concerns the Proposition taken materially: if we reflect upon the form of it, there will be two things to be considered.

First, That the Proposition is indefinite, and equipollent to an Universal; *They that resist*, that is, πᾶσα ψυχὴ, *every soul* (as in the first Verse)

Verſe) that reſiſts, without any exception of perſons.

Secondly, That the Act of Reſiſtance is ſet down likewiſe abſolutely without any reſtraint, in reſpect of any pretences or cauſes whatſoever. So that the ſence of the words reſolved, and expounded by the Scriptures, is this; Every Soul, which upon any pretence whatſoever, in any manner whatſoever, ſhall reſiſt the lawful Authority that is over him, *ſhall receive to himſelf damnation*, that is, he puts himſelf thereby into a ſtate of damnation.

This I conceive to be the meaning of the Holy Ghoſt in the words of my Text. I muſt acknowledge, that two things have been queſtioned in this Propoſition by the men of this unhappy, viperous, and adulterous Generation.

I. The firſt is, Whether τὸ κρίμα ought to be interpreted ſo ſeverely, as to ſignifie eternal damnation.

II. Whether that, which is ſaid concerning all perſons and pretences, can be made good upon the Principles of Chriſtianity.

1. As to the former of theſe, I ſhall only ſay, that the Argument brought againſt this interpretation doth, in truth, exceedingly confirm it.

Object. The Allegation is, that τὸ κρίμα is uſed in Scripture for Temporal Judgment. The place produced is, 1 *Cor.* xi. 29. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh* τὸ κρίμα, *damnation to himſelf*: where the Apoſtle ſeemeth to explain τὸ κρίμα by the following words, Verſe 30. *For this cauſe many are weak and ſickly, and many ſleep*; viz. by Temporal Judgments.

And

And indeed this is true; but these things likewise ought to be observed. *Sol.*

1. That the same penalty is denounced in the Gospel to those, who *resist Authority*, and to those, that are *guilty of the body of Christ*, 1 Cor. xi. 27. and *trample upon the blood of the everlasting Covenant*. Heb. 10. 29.

2. That neither *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, nor yet the *Corinthians*, were by their Temporal Judgments exempted from Eternal.

3. And lastly, That seeing the great difference betwixt the Legal and Evangelical dispensation did consist in this, that the express Promises and Threatnings, under the Law, were Temporal; and under the Gospel, Eternal: if God shall, under the Gospel, besides Eternal punishments due to every

sin, add moreover to some particular sins the threatnings of temporal Judgments, let these men consider what advantage they have gotten, and what can more be devised to contribute to the aggravations of such a sin. I shall say no more to the first Question, nor to that part of the Text, which concerns the damnation of Resisters precisely considered: but shall apply my self to the resolution of the second.

II. It is impossible in half an hour, to speak concerning all those pretences for resistance of Magistrates; which, being raised by Satan, and made use of by the children of disobedience, are falsly charged upon Religion. I shall single out some of the chief of them, and examine them by *the Law and the Testimony*, by the Old and

and New Teſtament; adding to them, as occaſion requires, the judgment and practiſe of the Primitive Chriſtians; and afterwards make a brief Application.

Thoſe, which have given the greateſt ſcandal, as having troubled the Chriſtian World, and almoſt turned it upſide down, are reducible to the two Heads of Religion, and Civil Affairs.

Firſt, Thoſe which refer to Religion, are ſuch ſcandalous Tenets as theſe:

I. That Erroneous (ſuppoſe Heretical or Idolatrous) Powers may be reſiſted; eſpecially if they endeavour to force men to their own Religion.

II. That Chriſtian Magiſtrates have no power in matters of Religion: *viz.* None

1. In religious Cauſes.
2. Over religious Perſons.

By Orders.
By perſonal Gifts.

Secondly, Thoſe which refer to matters Civil, are reducible to ſuch as theſe;

I. Harſh Adminiſtration.
II. Pretences of Competition of Power; and the like.

Now I ſhall not be afraid or backward to acknowledge, that if any one of theſe Tenets be agreeable to the Principles of Chriſtianity, or to the practiſe of the Primitive and pureſt Chriſtians, who are to be preſumed to have known the mind of Chriſt and his Apoſtles; then we are to admit, that there is reaſon in what is alledged to create a Jealouſie upon Religion.

For,

For, 1. If Erroneous, Heretical, or Idolatrous Magiſtrates may be reſiſted, (becauſe they are ſo, or becauſe they join oppreſſion of godly men unto their errour in Religion) how can any Kingdom ſtand? Theſe are matters wherein every man makes himſelf a Judge; and it is not material, whether he judge righteous or unrighteous judgment; the matter once ſtated *in Theſi*, that in ſuch caſes men may reſiſt, the *Hypotheſis* is eaſily made, and men let looſe to act according to their proper apprehenſions, or the pretences of thoſe, who have power with them.

What ſhall be done, when, at the ſame time, a Prince ſhall be judged by one part of his Subjects Heretical and prophane, for departing from Superſtition, and vindicating his power from unjuſt Uſurpations

pations over it; while another part shall judge him to be Superstitious, and will never believe him to abhor Idols, so long as he will not commit Sacrilege? What shall be done, while some conclude him to be irreligious, because he will not worship Images; others Idolatrous, because he kneels at the Communion? and both esteem him an Oppressour, because he restrains their Zeal, and hinders them from that excess of Riot, which they pant after, to the devouring of one another?

Supposing this Tenet to be true, it is indeed evident no Government can be. But now what colour can there be, to charge this Tenet upon Christianity? Doth the Old or New Testament give any occasion to this Doctrine? Is it countenanced (1.) by *Moses*, or (2.) by the Prophets? or (3.) by our Saviour?

viour? or (4.) by the Apoſtles? (5) That *Cloud of Witneſſes*, (the Noble Army of Martyrs) did they give Teſtimony to this Aſſertion, or to the contrary? I may not inſiſt: a word to each of theſe.

1. *Moſes* was ſo far from the Doctrine of Reſiſtance, that, notwithſtanding the hardneſs of *Pharaoh's* heart, the cruelty of the bondage, the weakneſs of the *Egyptians* by Plagues, the numbers of *Iſrael*, ſix hundred thouſand, and three thouſand five hundred and fifty fighting men above twenty years old; beſides the Tribe of *Levi*: yet he would not lead them into the promiſed Land without *Pharaoh's* poſitive and expreſs conſent to their departure.

2. As for the Prophets; in the third Chapter of *Daniel* we find three of Gods Children put to the trial

trial (the fiery trial) of this Doctrine, by *Nebuchadnezzar*, an Idolater, and a Tyrant, acting highly under both those Capacities together. They were cast into the fiery Furnace, because they would not worship the Golden Image which he had set up. And in the sixth, we find *Daniel* thrown into the Lions Den, only for praying to the God of *Israel*. Let us consider their Behaviour, did they resist, or mutiny, or labour to alienate, or discontent, or (by denouncing threats or terrours) to discourage Subjects from Obedience? How had they been instructed by their Prophets? *Jeremy* (2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 13.) had taught them, that *Zedekiah* had turned from the Lord God of *Israel*, in rebelling against *Nebuchadnezzar*, who had *made him swear by God*: and that they ought *to seek*

the

the peace of the City whither they were carried Captives, and to pray unto the Lord for it, Jer.xxix.7. And therefore the three Children in the third of *Daniel* only refer themſelves to God for deliverance; and *Daniel,* in the midſt of the Lions Den, prays heartily for *Darius, O King, live for ever!* Dan.vi.21.

3. In the next place, let us conſider the caſe of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and ſee whether any ſuch Tenet may be collected from their Doctrine or Practice, their Speeches or their Actions. As for what concerns our Lord Chriſt, I have had the Honour formerly in this place more at large to vindicate him from ſuch aſperſions. He paid Tribute at the expence of a Miracle, *Mat.* xvii. 27. He ſubmitted himſelf to all the Powers that were over him; to the *Sanhedrim*, and their

their Delegates, to *Herod*, to *Pontius Pilate*: he submitted himself to death by an unjust sentence, even to the bitter and accursed death upon the Cross, *Philip.* ii. 8. This was his Practise: as for his Doctrine; He taught men to *render to Cæsar the things that were Cæsars*, Mat. xxii. 21. He acknowledged *Pilate's power* to be *from above*, John xix. 11. He rebuked *Peter* for smiting with the Sword; and told him, that *those that take the Sword, shall perish by the Sword*, Mat. xxvi. 52. He taught his Disciples to *pray for* them *which* should *persecute* them, *Mat.* v. 44. And the utmost permission which he gave them, was, when they were *persecuted in one City, to flee unto another*, Matth x. 23.

4. As for the Apostles: They taught men to *obey them that have the rule over them*, Hebr. xiii. 17.

To

To ſubmit themſelves to every Ordinance of man, 1 Pet. ii. 13. *To do all things without murmuring or diſputing*, Philip. ii. 14. *To pray for Kings, and all that are in Authority*, 1 Tim. ii. 2. Saint *Peter* hath told us, that ſuch as *deſpiſe Dominion*, and *ſpeak evil of Dignities*, are (in an eſpecial manner) *reſerved to Judgment*, 1 Pet. ii 9, 10. and Saint *Paul*, in my Text, that *they ſhall receive damnation*.

This Doctrine they Sealed with their blood. Saint *Peter* (according to Eccleſiaſtical Tradition) was crucified, and Saint *Paul* beheaded, *James* the Son of *Zebedeus* ſlain with the Sword, *&c.*

Now, as for the Powers, to which all theſe Inſtructions and Behaviours did refer, they were for Idolatry, and Tyranny, and Perſecution, *Humani generis portenta*.

If

Obj. If it be objected, That all these submitted, because they were not able to resist:

Sol. the Answer, upon Christian Principles, might be; That He, which restrained the Flames, and *stopped the mouths of Lions*, could have given his Servants power to resist; that Christ could have *prayed his Father*, who would *have given him more than twelve Legions of Angels* for his relief; that the Apostles, who wrought mighty signs and wonders, could have rescued themselves: had it not rather pleased the great Ordainer of Powers, by their submission, to ratifie and establish the Doctrine of Obedience.

Matth. 26.53.

5. But the belief, and practise of the Primitive Christians will satisfie this Objection even to common Sense and Reason.

The Instances in this kind are infinite,

finite, where Christians, abounding in numbers, being in Arms, and abundantly able to make resistance, have chosen, with the expence of their lives, to yield obedience to Idolaters, persecuting them for their Religion. I shall name but two Examples.

Tertullian * tells the Emperour, that his *Cities, Islands, Castles, Councils, Armies, Regiments*, and *Companies*; the *Palace*, the *Senate*, the *Courts* of *Judicature were filled with Christians*: and yet they submitted to persecution. Apolog. § 37.

And we read that the *Thebean* Legion consisted of six thousand, six hundred, sixty and six persons, every man Christian, when they submitted to the Decimation of *Maximinian* for Religion.

I shall say no more to the first Pretence.

II. Now the second is like unto it, alike prejudical to Government; alike false, and scandalous to Religion.

Mat. xii. 25. 1 Cor. xiv. 33. *An House, or Kingdom divided cannot stand*: and *God is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace*; and that especially in Religion. If none have this power to order matters of Religion, there must be Confusion: if any other beside the Supreme Magistrate, there will be Division. The inevitable Inconveniences of the exemption of religious Things, and religious Persons, from the power of the Magistrate, are abundantly set forth by such, as would improve them to the disadvantage of Religion. And, indeed, to go about to deny, or to diminish the dismal Consequences of such Pretences, were to endeavour to put out the eyes of all

all the men of Reaſon, and Experience in the world.

My preſent Duty is to enquire, what relation theſe Pretences have to the Principles of Chriſtianity; and that

Firſt, As to religious Cauſes.

Secondly, As to Eccleſiaſtical Perſons.

Thirdly, As to holy, or gifted Brethren, as they ſtyle themſelves

Now, in order to a reſolution in theſe Enquiries, I ſhall (as a Lemma) humbly propoſe one Obſervation.

It is this, That, whereas there are two things, whereon all Political adminiſtration doth depend: 1. Concerning the Rights, and Bounds, and regulation of Sovereign Powers; 2. Concerning the Duties, and Obedience of Sub-

jects: we find both Christ, and the Apostles, frequently labouring to settle in the Consciences of men that part, which concerns Obedience; but no where restraining, or limiting, or particularly regulating the Office of Sovereign Powers; but leaving them to those general Rules, which concern the Account and Duty of all men in their several stations, and to the terms, whereupon the Providence of God was wont to settle the Princes, and Governours of the World. Let the rights of *Cæsar* be what they will (in reference to Tribute, or other matters) Christ will not determine them: This he will, those things, which belong to *Cæsar* (according to *Jus Gentium*) must be rendered to him. He doth not examine *Pilate's* power, in case of Blasphe-

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my, or Treaſon; but acknowledges it, and ſubmits. He falls not upon ſifting, or examining the power of the *Sanhedrim*; either their original power, or the power left them by the Romans: *They ſit in Moſes Chair, &c. Whatſoever therefore they bid you do, do it,* Matth. xxiii. 2, 3.

And ſo likewiſe the Apoſtles, they ſeem to be unconcerned (as it were) in the governing part of Civil Policy. No word is found in all their Writings, enquiring into the Rights of the *Roman* Emperours (who were ſovereign) or limiting the Exerciſe of their Power. Only thus much they take for certain, ſuch, as they were, they were ordained of God. And they ſpend all their labour in founding deeply, and firmly eſtabliſhing that other part, which concerns Obedience. From

From this Observation it will follow, That whatever Things, or Persons were not before the times of Christ, and his Apostles, exempt from the power of the Magistrate, are not by the Foundations, and Principles of Christianity exempted. (*Non eripit mortalia, qui regna dat cœlestia.*) And it will only remain for us to enquire, what was the manner of the Nations of the World, and of God's peculiar people, in reference to these Particulars, before, and at the times of Christ, and his Apostles. To which if we shall add the practice of the best, and most ancient Christian Emperors, I know not what more can be desired to clear the present Argument.

I suppose it needless to put in a Caution, that while we speak of

of the Magiſtrate's power to order matters of Religion; we do not entitle him to the Prieſt's Office (the Spiritual Function) or the Execution of it, in preaching the word, adminiſtring the Sacraments, exerciſing the power of Ordination, or of the Keys, &c. Bleſſed be the Lord God of our Fathers, who hath put it into our Sovereign's heart to be tender of the rights of the Church, as of the Apple of his Eye.

This is a Calumny inſiſted on generally by almoſt all our Adverſaries, but it is too rude, and groſs, to be ſpoken to in this place. Rather let us ſee whether the Sovereigns among all people, Heathen, Jews, Chriſtians, have not claimed, and exerciſed power in all Cauſes, over all Perſons, as well Eccleſiaſtical, as Civil.

Rom. i. 14. 1. For Cauſes. The New Teſtament ſometimes divides the Gentiles into Greeks, and Barbarians; ſometimes into wiſe, and unwiſe: according to which diviſion the Romans are, I ſuppoſe, reckoned under the Greeks, from whence they were moſtly extracted, and with whom they contended in Civility. Briefly, 1. the Greeks, 2. the Romans, 3. the Barbarous Nations did always exerciſe ſuch a power.

Polit. lib 7 cap. 8. (1.) *Ariſtotle*, the greateſt among the Greeks, tells us, that the firſt, and principal thing in a Common Wealth is ἡ περὶ τὸ θεῖον τιμή. And, accordingly, if we conſult the Fragments, which are left us, of the Laws of the moſt antient Grecian Common-Wealths, we ſhall find nothing ſo frequent, as the Ordinances concerning their Religion. (2) A-

2. Amongſt the Romans, *Cicero* (the wiſeſt) ſaith, that Religion is the Foundation of Humane Society; as in truth it is. To ſay nothing of the Ordinances of *Numa*, the *Jus Pontificium* &c. the Titles of the Twelve Tables are many of them concerning Religion.

(3.) As for the Barbarous Nations, I ſhall not multiply Teſtimonies, nor go beyond the line of Scripture. In the third of *Daniel* we find an Edict of the King of Babylon enjoyning all *People, Languages, and Tongues* to commit Idolatry; *Verſ.* 4.5. And, by and by, another Edict, that *no man ſhould ſpeak amiſs of the God of Shadrach, Meſech, and Abednego* Verſ. 29. In the ſixth we find *Darius* (the Perſian) by the advice of his Council ſigning a Decree, againſt *petitioning*

tioning (for thirty days) any God besides himself; Verse 9. and shortly another, that *all men should tremble, and fear before the God of Daniel*; Verse 26. In the third of *Jonah*, the King of *Nineveh*, and his Nobles proclaim a publick Fast. In the first of *Ezra*, *Cyrus* puts forth an Edict to build the Temple at *Hierusalem*. In the fourth, *Artaxerxes* reverseth it. In the sixth *Darius* re-inforceth it.

I suppose it is now evident, that Greeks, and Barbarians did exercise this power.

To think to elevate the force of these Instances, because all these were *Strangers from God*, and *aliens from the Common-Wealth of Israel*, is to mistake the purpose for which they are alledged.

Ephes ii. 12.

However, it was not thus a-

mong

mong the Kings of the Nations only, but among the holieſt, and wiſeſt of the Governours, and Kings of *Iſrael*, and *Juda*; who for aboliſhing falſe Worſhip, and ordaining the true, are often highly commended by the Holy Ghoſt in the Scriptures. The time would fail me to ſpeak diſtinctly, and particularly, of the Ordinances concerning Religion, which were made by *Moſes*, *Joſhua*, *David* *Solomon*, *Aſa*, *Jeboſhaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Manaſſes* alſo, and *Joſiah*: concerning whom the Scripture gives theſe Characters. *Moſes* was *the man of God.* Joſhua *the ſervant of the Lord.* David *a man after Gods own heart.* There was *none like unto* Solomon. Aſa *his heart was perfect with the Lord. The Lord was with* Jehoſhaphat. Hezekiah *did that, which was right in the ſight of the*

Deut. 33. 1.
Joſh. xxiv. 29.
1 Sam. xiii. 14.
2 Chron. ix. 22.
1 Kings xv. 14.
2 Chron. xvii. 3.
2 Chron. 29. 2.

2 Chron. xxxiii. 13. 2 Chron. xxxv. 26. *the Lord.* Manaſſeth *was heard of God.* Joſiah *did that, which was right*; and his *Goodneſs* was recorded.

Now the Acts of every one of theſe concerning the Worſhip of God, and matters of Religion are recorded, and applauded in the Scriptures. For theſe all ordered, and regulated Services, and Sacraments, and Covenants with God; they erected Altars and Tabernacles, and Temples, and dedicated them unto the Lord; they deſtroyed Idolatry, reformed abuſes in Gods Worſhip, ſettled both the ſtanding Worſhip of God, and occaſional Thanks-givings, and Humiliations: to omit other matters.

The whole *Aaronical* Miniſtery, which conſiſted in ceremonies, and Sacrifices, Typical, and Carnal

nal Ordinances, was not ordered by the hand of *Aaron*, but of *Moſes*, who was *King in Jeſurun*. Deut. xxxiii. 5.

The Tabernacle, and Temple-ſervice (which, beſide the Moſaical Inſtitutions, conſiſted of Spiritual abiding Ordinances) was inſtituted by *David*: who, being *the ſweet Singer of Iſrael*, and acquainted more then ever any man (for ought appears) with the ways, and helps of lifting up the Heart to ſpiritual intercourſe with God, to that end appointed the uſe of Muſick in the Church; and (without fear of ſtinting the Spirit) he preſcribed Set-forms of Praiſe, and Prayers for the uſe of the Temple; and ordered the ſervice for every day. A Pſalm, conſiſting partly of the one hundred and fifth, ninety ſixth, and one hundred

hundred and eighteenth, he first delivered to *Asaph*, and his Brethren, at the reduction of the Ark from the house of *Obed-Edom*; 1 *Chron.* xvi. 7. And divers other *Psalms* were composed by him for the Service of the Church.

And what he had ordained, *Solomon* put in practice. In the fifth Chapter of the second Book of *Chronicles*, we find the pattern of the Service of this Time, and
Vers. 12. Place, the *Sons of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, arrayed in white Linen, with musical Instruments, praising*
Vers. 13. *the Lord, saying, For he is good,* &c. *viz.* reciting the one hundred and eighteenth *Psalm*: and, in to-
Vers. 14. ken of God's acceptance, *a Cloud filled the house.*

The one hundred thirty and sixth *Psalm* likewise was wont to be sung in Thanksgivings. So we

we find also *Hezekiah*, and *Josiah*, *praising the Lord in the words of David, and Asaph.* 2 Chron. xxix. 25. 2 Chron. xxxv. 15.

Thus stood the matter under the Law; the ordering of matters of Religion was not exempted from the Supreme Power. *Hezekiah* varied from *Moses* his Law, and was blameless. Neither was it otherwise in the best, and purest Times under the Gospel.

It had been but a slender invitation to the Emperours to become Christian; if, by submitting to Christianity, they must lose so considerable a part of the Sovereign Power enjoyed by all their Predecessours, and be thereby exposed inevitably to Seditions, and Rebellions, upon every Frantick eruption of religious Melancholy. The primitive Emperours

rours understood themselves otherwise, and so did the Christians under them. I may not stand to recite the *Annals* of the Church. If *Constantine* had not interposed for the composing of the *Arrian* Heresie, what had become either of Government, or Religion?

The drawing up of Canons for the regulation of Religion was by our Lord committed to the Apostles, and their Successours, the Bishops, and other Ecclesiastical Persons: but that these Canons should be enforced as Laws by temporal Penalties it, was by sanction of Civil powers.

In the second Oecumenical Council, the Fathers, assembled at *Constantinople*, beseech *Theodosius* the Elder to ratifie the Decrees of that Synod.

Thus

Thus we find *Juſtinian* eſtabliſhing the *Nomo-Canonicon*, or *Code* of the Univerſal Church, conſiſting of the Canons of the four firſt General, and five ancient Provincial Councils; and commanding them ὡς νόμους φυλάτεσθαι, to be kept as Laws. Briefly, to determine this Queſtion, we need only to view the Titles of the ſixteenth Book of the *Code* of *Theodoſius*, the thirteen firſt Titles in the *Code* of *Juſtinian*, *Photius's* Nomo-Canon, and the like. *Novel. Conſtit.* 131.

The Pretence of exemption of Eccleſiaſtical Cauſes, ſo as hath been intimated, as it is inconſiſtent with Government; ſo it is alſo with the Principles of Chriſtianity.

2. Thus much having been ſpoken concerning the regulation

of Matters of Religion, it will be needless to enlarge concerning the second Pretence of the exemption of Ecclesiastical Persons.

This Tenet is equally dangerous with the former, and equally contrary to the Principles of Christianity. It were to be wished, that all men professing themselves Ministers were thorowly convinced of the Doctrine of Obedience: otherwise, as they grow popular, they become dangerous. *Sacerdotum quidam eo sunt ingenio, ut, ni pareant, territent.* And Saint *Chrysostom* commenting upon *every Soul*, &c. saith, ὁ Ἀποστολος, ὁ Εὐαγγελιστὴς ὁ Προφήτης. Both the Apostle, the Evangelist, and the Prophet. Our Saviour was both Priest, and Prophet; and the Apostles were Ecclesiastical persons: yet did not think themselves exempted.

Such

Such persons were not exempted, either before, or after the Times of our Saviour; neither in 1. a Single, or 2. Joynt capacity. *From the beginning it was not so.* Mat. xix. 8.

1. As to Single persons under the Law, we find an Instance of the Exercise of the Sovereign power over an High-Priest offending, in *Abiathar*, whom *Solomon thrust out*, and placed *Zadoc* in his room. 1 Kings ii. 27. Ibid. 35.

2. As to the calling of Assemblies; before the Gospel-times, it did belong to the Supreme Magistrate. We find *Moses*, not *Aaron*; *Joshuah*, not *Eleazar*; *David*, not *Abiathar*; *Solomon*, not *Zadoc*; summoning the Priests, and Levites, to meet together. And

In the Primitive Times of the Christian Emperours, we do not

meet with Councils, or Synods called by the Bishop of *Rome*, nor with Ministers, casting themselves into Classical, and Synodical Meetings; nor with Assemblies of Divines, called against, or without the Prince's consent.

The indiction of Times, and Places, the convocation of Persons, the Presidency, the order of Debates, the dismission of the Assemblies, the roboration of Canons (as to making them Laws of the Empire) in the General, and provincial Councils, were all the work of the Supreme Magistrate. And

As for matters of Appeal, we find *Paul* appealing to *Cæsar*: *Athanasius* (from the Synod at *Tyre*) to *Constantine*; to whom three Appeals were likewise made

in

in the Cauſe of *Cæcilianus*, and *Donatus*: and many more inſtances of this, and the like nature.

3. I ſhould now diſmiſs this Head concerning Religion, did there not remain one Pretence more, and that ſo wild, and monſtrous, that it looks as if it were the laſt effort of the enemy of man-kind (*ultimus Diaboli conatus*) for it ſtrikes at the Heart both of Government, and of Religion. It is this, that Saints, and gifted Perſons, (as they call themſelves) are exempt from humane Laws: and in effect reſolves into this, that to reprobate others, and aſſume to themſelves the Title of the Godly Party, to talk of Reformation, and the Power of Godlineſs, of advancing the Kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt &c.

is

is to justifie Sacrilege and Treason, and horrid Rebellion, and to qualify them for the Kings, and Priests, and Prophets of the world.

How far this Satanical madness hath prevailed, to the confusion of all things Civil, and Sacred; to the scandal of Religion; the planting, and watering of Atheism, and Infidelity; I tremble to call to our remembrance

If my present business were to refute the men, that have given this offence, how easie were it to examine their Gifts, and their Saintship, and how hard to find them. But as the woman of *Samaria* said to our Saviour, *Art thou greater than our Father Jacob?* Joh. iv. 12. are they greater Saints, or better gifted, then *Peter*, and *Paul*, and the

the reſt of the Apoſtles? He, that ſaid, *Let every Soul be ſubject to the higher Powers*, had been *wrap'd up* (*whether in the body, or out, he could not tell*) *to the third heavens*: hath any of them been carried higher? Rom xiii. 1. 2 Cor. xii. 2, 3.

Chriſt the natural Son of God, the *Brightneſs of his Glory, the Expreſs Image of his Perſon*, ſaid, *Render to Cæſar the things that are Cæſars*: are they greater then Chriſt alſo? Heb. i. 3. Matt. xxii. 21.

But my preſent purpoſe being chiefly to remove theſe ſcandals from Religion; come, and let us reaſon together, What could Chriſt, and his Apoſtles have done more to prevent this ſcandal, then they have done? Their Doctrine, and practice hath been already ſhewn; and the Danger, and Heinouſneſs of the Sin of

Reſiſtance (in all the kinds, and degrees of it) diſcovered; neither can any thing more be imagined, which might be deſired to anticipate, and obviate this pretence, unleſs it be, that theſe things ſhould have been particularly foretold, and the Perſons (at leaſt their Party and Sect) deſcribed; that the world might be forewarned of them.

Will it then ſatisfy the enemies of our Religion, concerning the Truth, and Infallibility of the Scriptures, and the abhorrency of the Chriſtian Principle from this damnable Tenet; if it ſhall briefly appear, that theſe things have been punctually foretold by Chriſt and his Apoſtles?

Chriſt hath given warning of *grievous Wolves in Sheep's cloathing*.

Matth. vii 15.

More

More particularly Saint *Paul* hath told us, that *in the laſt days perilous times ſhould come* that there ſhould be *heady, high-minded Traytours, having a form of godlineſs, but denying the power thereof.* 2 Tim. iii. 1. Ibid Verſe 4. 5.

Saint *Peter*, that there ſhould be *falſe Teachers, which ſhould privily bring in damnable hereſies, preſumptuous, ſelf-willed, not afraid to ſpeak evil of Dignities.* 2 Pet. ii. 1. Ibid. Verſe 10.

Now, if all this be not ſufficient, Saint *Jude* hath taken up this Propheſie of Saint *Peter* and given us two clear Characters of theſe Perſons, whereby they might be known. He tells us, 1. That they ſhall be Separatiſts from the Church, and 2. falſe-pretenders to the Spirit. *Theſe are they, which ſeparate themſelves, being ſenſual, having not the ſpirit.* Jude 19.

I ſhall ſay no more to the Pretences

tences relating to that Head which concerns the matter of Religion.

2ly. Neither ſhalll I enlarge upon that other Head referring to matters Civil, where I inſtanced in two Pretences taken from,

I. Harſh Adminiſtration in the Magiſtrate.

II. Competition as to power in Subjects.

I. Neither the Time, nor the Deſign, which I have propounded, nor (indeed) my Profeſſion nor Abilities do allow me to enter into the depths of the Politicks, or to diſcourſe of the limitations of Sovereign Powers. Thus much is obvious to every man,

That there is no Cruelty ſo great as laxneſs of Government, nor

nor any Tyrany in the World like the rage of Subjects let loose; and that *the little Finger* of Licentiousness *is harder then the Loyns* of the severest Laws, and strictest Government.

I shall briefly shew, that the Scripture, foreseeing the easiness (by reason of the Self-love, and partiality of men) of this Pretence, and the danger of it, hath directly opposed it self against it.

I shall not mention particular Commands: let us have recourse to the main Foundations; the Body, and Substance of Christianity, the MISHPAT HAMELEK (the *Jus Regium*) the Fundamental Law of the Kings of *Israel*.

1. Christianity obligeth us to believe not only, that Christ is God

God, and that the Gospel is from God: but that all the Circumstances of the Ministery of Christ, and his Apostles, were ordered by his Providence. Why then were the times of *Tiberius*, and *Caligula*, and *Claudius*, and *Nero* (out of the Series of the Time spun out from the Creation) chosen, and selected for the promulgation of the Doctrine of Obedience. If harsh Administration of Power will exempt men from Obedience; at that time, when *Claudius*, or *Nero* was *Roman* Emperour, why should the Holy Ghost move Saint *Paul* to write to the *Romans*, *They that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation*? So much briefly for the Gospel.

2. As for the *Jus Regium* in the eighth of the first Book of *Samuel*

muel we find the *Iſraelites* deſiring a King: and God (though rejected by this motion) commands *Samuel* to *hearken to their voice.* Verſe 9. Yet, that they might know what they did, and not be ſurprized (believing they might caſt of again their King at pleaſure) he charges him to proteſt ſolemly, and ſhew them משפט המלך Our Tranſlation renders it, *The manner of the King.* The Septuagint, and all ancient Eaſtern and Weſtern Tranſlations render it by words of ſignifying the Law, or the Right of the King, *Jus Regium.*

This (ſaith *Samuel*) ſhall be משפט המלך *He ſhall take your Sons, and Daughters, your Vine-yards, your Fields, and your Flocks,* &c. He tells them of harſh Adminiſtrations. Verſe 11. 12. &c.

Was

Was it the meaning of the Holy Ghost, that (*de Jure*) Princes ought to do, or that it was lawful for them to do after the manner there described?

Verse 14. In the seventeenth Chapter of *Deuteronomy* we find the Duty of the Kings of *Israel* described in a way directly contrary to this; they

Verse 19. were *to fear the Lord, and not to turn aside to the right hand, or to the left from his Commandments. Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings;*

Psal. ii. 10. 11. *be instructed, ye Judges of the Earth: serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling.*

Was it a Prediction of what would be their condition, what would be the manner of their Kings?

Not that neither. We do not read of any of the Kings of *Judah*, or *Israel*, that proceeded to the

the height there expressed. Even *Ahab, who sold himself to work wickedness*, did not take *Naboth's* Vinyard, by force; he would not seise on it, till *Jezebel* had brought about the pretence of a Legal Forfeiture. 1 Kings xxi. 25.

What then is the meaning of מטפט המלך? Surely it imports thus much, that, if all this hard usage should come upon them, they might *cry unto the Lord*; (Verse 18.) but that it would not dissolve *Jus Regium* (the right of Sovereignty) or enable them to resist their Kings, or rebel against them.

II. There remains yet one Pretence to speak to, it concerns Competition of Power, either on

1. Pretences of Succession into the Magistrate's place in case of failour of Duty, or upon supposals

suppoſals of forfeiture of Power.

2. Pretences of the laſt reſolution of Power into the people, the diffuſed multitude, or the peoples Repreſentative, and the like.

Concerning which kind of Pretences I muſt repeat what hath been ſaid of the other. If they be admitted, they are deſtructive to Magiſtracy. If they be encouraged by Religion, there will be reaſon, that Magiſtrates be jealous over it. But now is the Spirit of the Scriptures, and the tendency of it entirely bent another way.

The New Teſtament affords no Inſtance in this kind. As to the Old, I ſhall deſire, that two Inſtances may be conſidered.

1. The Caſe of *David*, and *Saul*.
2. The Caſe of *Corah*, and *Moſes*: which

which two Inſtances (if the time would bear it) would take in the Subſtance of all, that may be alledged in this kind.

1. It is (I conceive) impoſſible to carry the firſt ſort of Pretences higher, then they were ſtated in the Caſe of *David*, and *Saul*. *Saul* was at firſt declared, and conſtituted King by *Samuel*, acting in the Name of the Lord: and, when he had reigned two years, the ſame *Samuel*, in the Name of the ſame God, before the ſame people, denounces publickly, that his Kingdom ſhould not continue; and that God had ſought *a man after his own heart*, becauſe he invaded the Prieſts Office. After this, he limits a certain day, he tells him, *This day the Lord hath rent the Kingdom of Iſrael from thee, and given it to thy neighbour*, becauſe of

1 Sam. xiii. 14.

Chap. xv. 12.

his rebellion against God in the Case of *Amalek*.

The pretence of Failour, and Forfeiture can go no higher. Now for the pretences of *David* to step into his Government, and wrest it from him: He was anointed by *Samuel*, for ought appears, without reservation for the life of *Saul*. He was qualified for Government; *a valiant man, a man of War, prudent in matters, a comely Person, and the Lord was with him*. He had received Testimony from God of his Election: the Spirit of God departed from *Saul*, and rested upon him. He had power in his hand, he was *set over the men of War, accepted by all the people* all *Israel*, nd *Judah* loved him. After all this, you know his Provocations, his Advantages, and his Behaviour; he durst

Chap. xvi. 13.

Ibid. Vers. 18.

Chap. xviii. 5.

durſt not *touch the Lords anointed*; and, when another pretended to have done it at *Saul*'s entreaty *in extremis*, he revenged his death, and lamented over him, *Ye mountains of Gilboa*, &c. 2 Sam. i. 21.

2. But that other Pretence, that after a lawful Sovereign is eſtabliſhed (according to the Suppoſition of my Text, and my Diſcourſe) the power ſtill remains in the people, (in the diffuſed body of them, or their Repreſentatives) to alter the Government, as they pleaſe; it is in reſpect of Policy, and Government, what the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is to Religion, it deſtroys the foundations of the peace, and ſafety of men, and makes that to be the Artifice of man, which is the Ordinance of God. How much God abhorred this Pretence, will ap-

pear in the Caſe of *Corah*, and his company. When God ſent Moſes to bring the *Iſraelites* out of *Egypt*, he ſanctifyed him, and put his Name upon him; *Thou ſhalt be to him inſtead of God*: and when he had brought them forth, he made him a Prince and a Lawgiver over them.

Exod. iv. 16.

Acts vii. 35. Deut. xxxi. 4.

The ſupreme Power was in *Moſes*, who called to his aſſiſtance a Senate, or Parliament, (מוֹעֵד) conſiſting of the Heads of the Tribes of Iſrael. In this Council Nature ſoon began to work, ſome *envied Moſes, whom God had choſen, and Aaron the Saint of the Lord. Dathan*, and *Abiram*, the Sons of *Eliab*, Heads of Families, in the Tribe of *Reuben*, thought both the Civil Power, and (if that muſt be transferred, from the firſt-born, to one Tribe) the Prieſthood alſo was due

Num. xvi.

Pſal. cvi. 16.

due to them, being Eldeſt Brethren of the Eldeſt Tribe. *Korah*, an eminent man amongſt the *Levites*, was offended, that the High-Prieſts Office went beſide him, and was ſettled upon *Aaron*, and his Poſterity.

Theſe were their ſecret griefs; for a redreſs whereof they make a party in the Parliament, they gain to them two hundred and fifty men, *famous in the Parliament, men of renown*; and, in order to their ambitious Deſigns, they remonſtrate againſt *Moſes*, Verſ. 13. and their Declaration was this Pretence, which we are upon; that *all the Congregation were Holy*, and that *Moſes*, and *Aaron* had *lifted up themſelves above them*; that is, that their power was a contrivance of themſelves, not an Ordinance of God; that, notwithſtanding

standing what God had done to settle the Civil, and Ecclesiastical power, it remained still in the people, or their Representatives assembled together. Now the Scripture tells us, that, since the world began, God was never more highly provoked, then upon this occasion; *when he heard this, he was wrath, and greatly abhorred them*; he invented *a new thing* in the world for their sakes; for the *Earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and covered the Congregation of Abiram.*

Numb. xvi. 32.

Application. I have now done with these Presences, and my endeavour hath been to vindicate Religion from the charges of unbelieving Politicians, and indeed to shew, that it is not a Spirit of carnal Compliance, but the true, and genuine Spirit of Christianity, which runs through the Doctrine, and Govern-

ment

ment of the Church of *England*. After what hath been ſpoken, I hope, I may preſume to ſay with the Apoſtle, *Do we now make void the Laws through Faith? yea, we eſtabliſh the Laws.* Rom. iii. 31.

We have ſeen the Chriſtian Theory; doth the Philoſophical Theory provide better for the ſafety of Princes, and the eſtabiſhment of Government?

It tells us in effect, that Might is Right; that every thing is juſt, or unjuſt; good, or evil according to the pleaſure of the prevailing Force, whom we are to obey till a ſtronger then he cometh, or we be able to go through with reſiſtance.

That, in reference to this life, Obedience is a matter of Wit, and Prudence, and after life there remain for us no Concernments.

How straminеous is this Theory compared with the Christian Theory, which speaks in this wise, *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers, &c?*

That this is the genuine Christian Theory, hath in some measure been demonstrated; so that indeed it may be wondered from whence these Prejudices have arisen.

But alas! that *my head were waters*! They have one grand Objection, to which having spoken I shall conclude.

If this be the Doctrine of Christianity, how comes it to pass, that those, who pretend the highest to Religion, and profess themselves the onely Christians, (the Bigot, and Jesuited Romanist; the frighted, and transported Reformist) have been authors of the most hor-

horrible Treasons, and Rebellions?

On the one hand, what mean the Catholick Leagues? On the other, the Solemn League, and Covenant, forced upon Subjects, *renitente Principe*?

On one hand *what means* (shall I say *the lowing of the Oxen*, or rather) the roaring of the Bulls, the thundring of Excommunications, the absolving Subjects from their Allegiance, the Actual Murthers of Princes, the attempts for blowing up King, Lords, and Commons at one clap? What is the meaning of the noise of the Bells, of the claps of Squibs, and Fire-works, which we hear? On the other hand what was the meaning of that black, and terrible dispensation, which will cause the ears of all Posterity to tingle.

It

It is but a little while since the anointed of the Lord, the holiest, the wisest, the best of Kings, was taken in the snares of men pretending to reformation, and sacrificed to the fury of men possessed by *an evil Spirit from the Lord*. He was *offered as a Lamb that is dumb*, or rather like the Lamb of God, to the rage of wild fanatical Enthusiasts.

It is but a very little while, since the Lamentation of *Jeremy* was in the mouth of all the faithful in the Land.

Lam. ii. 9. *Our Kings, and our Princes were amongst the Gentiles* (provoked to serve other Gods) *the Law was no more, the Prophets also received no vision from the Lord.* And all these things were brought to pass by men pretending wonders in Religion.

And

And they would know the reaſon of all theſe Diſpenſations. But who art thou, O man! who preſſeſt into the ſecret of Gods Pavilion? *How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his ways paſt finding out; ſuch knowledge is too wonderful, we cannot attain unto it.*

It may be, theſe things have been done, that the Sayings of our Saviour might be fulfilled, *It cannot be but offences will come but Wo be to them, by whom they come*; and, *It were better, that a milſtone*, &c. Matth. xviii. 7. Ibid. Verſe 6.

It may be, the Gunpowder-Treaſon was permitted to be deſigned, that the diſappointment might be had in everlaſting remembrance, and celebrated, as it is this day: *Son of man, write the name of the day, even of this ſame day:* Ezek. xxiv. 2.

day: the King of Babylon set himself against Jerusalem this same day.

It may be, God suffered the late Rebellion to prevail, that he might not *leave himself without witness*, but shew forth his wonders in our days, in the miraculous restitution of our gracious Sovereign, and the Church. If he had not been driven out, how could he have been restored? *not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of our God.*

It may be, this was done, that we might say no more, *The Lord liveth, which delivered us* from the Treason of pretended Catholicks: but *The Lord liveth which hath delivered* us from the Tyranny, and blood rage of the wild Fanatical Enthusiasts.

Surely, all these things have been permitted, that the *Stone which*, the

the Builders refuſed, might be made *tried and precious*, and that his Patience, his Piety, his Conſtancy in Religion, his Chriſtian Magnanimity being manifeſt to all the World, by the impatient *deſire of all Nations*, he might become the *head of the Corner*.

Surely, theſe things were ſuffered, that the Faith, and Patience, and Loyalty of the Church of *England* might be made bright and glorious by the Flames of Perſecution: and that in the day, when God ſhall have given our moſt Gracious Sovereign the hearts, or necks of all his Enemies, it may not repent him of the Kindneſs he hath ſhewn to Religion, and Government, in lifting out of the duſt the deſpiſed Head of that only Church, (for ought I know

know) which makes Obedience without base restrictions, and limitations, an Article of its Religion.

Lastly, these things, it may be, have been permitted, that by the Triumph of this day, and by the vengeance lately executed in the sight of this Sun, the Atheistical world might be convinced, that *the Powers, that be, are ordained of God*, and that, *though the wicked do evil an hundred times, and God prolong their days*; yet *Vengeance is his, and he will repay it*, and *They that resist, shall receive to themselves Damnation.*

FINIS.

Againſt the

Antiſcripturiſts.

A

SERMON

Preached at

WHITE-HALL.

February 20. $16\frac{60}{70}$.

BY

SETH Lord Biſhop of *Sarum.*

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Againſt the

Antiſcripturiſts.

2 Tim. iii. 16.

All Scripture is given by Inſpiration of God.

IN the verſe preceding it is ſaid concerning the Scriptures of the old Teſtament, that *they are able to make a man wiſe unto ſalvation,* διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (*by the faith which is in Jeſus Chriſt*): And it follows immediately, *All Scripture,* &c.

Ἡ πίστις (the Faith) is often by a Metonymy taken for the Gol-

pel, which is the Object of the
Gal. 1.23. Faith of Christians. We read often
3. 25.
Rom. 12. of the *Preaching*, and *Hearing of*
6.
Tit. 1. 4. *Faith*; of *the Analogy of Faith*, *the*
Jud. 3. *common Faith which was once delivered to the Saints* (in the preaching of Christ, and the Writings of his Evangelists and Apostles) and so I conceive it is to be taken in this place. So that the meaning of the whole is this, The Old Testament understood and expounded according to the Analogy of the New, is able to make a man wise. And the Pen-men of the Canonical Books of the Old Testament (wherein *Timothy* had been instructed ἀπὸ βρέφους) and of the Books of the New Testament (which except those of St. *John* were extant before the writing of this Epistle) were inspired and directed by the Spirit of God.

The

The words of the Text are an entire Propoſition, aſſerting the Divine Authority of the Canon of Scripture; and my endeavour ſhall be at this time to prove the truth of that Propoſition. Wherein, that I may proceed with all plainneſs and clearneſs, I ſhall premiſe two words by way of { Petition, / Precaution.

1. By way of Petition, I ſuppoſe and take for granted;

1. The great principle of the power of God, and his providence in governing the world.
2. That our Body of Canonical Books of the Old Teſtament, is the ſame with that which was in Uſe in the time of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, And our body of the New Teſtament the ſame which was anciently received in the Church.

So that what ſhall be proved of thoſe, is applicable to the Original Scripture uſed in our time.

3. That thoſe Books of New Teſtament whoſe Authors were not anciently queſtioned, were written by thoſe Authors whoſe name they bear. And that thoſe few others which were ſometimes queſtioned by ſome particular Churches, and afterward Univerſally received, contain in them no one point of Faith or Manners diſſentient from the Contents of thoſe Books which were never queſtioned.

2. By way of Precaution and Admonition I muſt intreat you to take notice, that I ſhall not now meddle with the Controverſies con-

concerning Apocrypha, Tranſlations, *Keri* and *Chetib*, Hebrew points, various Lections, dubious Authors or parts of Scripture.

But my endeavour at this time ſhall be to Aſſert the Divine Authority of the body and ſubſtance of the Original Books of the Canon of the Old and New Teſtament: And this not in the way of common place, but in a particular Examination or Refutation of the moſt dangerous Opinions of the Antiſcripturiſts, which are theſe:

I. Of thoſe who pretend to believe the truth of the New Teſtament, and yet they deny the Divine Authority of the Old.

II. Of thoſe who pretend to believe the truth, but deny the Divine Authority of the New Teſtament.

III. Of such as pretend to believe matters of Fact to have been truly related in the New Testament, but do not believe the truth of the Doctrinal parts relating to Faith and Manners.

IV. Such as deny the truth of the Relation of matters of Fact in the New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole Body of Scripture. Of these as briefly and plainly as I can.

I. The first Opinion is of those, who pretending to believe the Truth of the New Testament, deny the Divine Authority of the Old Testament. The *Severians*, and the *Manichees*, *Basilides*, and *Carpocrates* of old: The *Catabaptists* of later times, some *Anabaptists*, *Antinomians*, and other Fanatical Sectaries amongst our selves.

In

In oppoſition to theſe, I ſhall ſhew, that ſuppoſing the truth of the New Teſtament, the Divine Authority of the Old Teſtament is to be acknowledged: Becauſe the Divine Authority of the Old Teſtament is aſſerted by Chriſt and his Evangeliſts and Apoſtles in the New.

1. Next to the Redemption of the world, the great buſineſs which Chriſt had to do upon Earth, was to Convince men that he was the Meſſias, and ſo to aſſert his Legiſlative Authority. And the great Argument which he uſed for the conviction of the world was this.

All the Marks and the entire Character of the Meſſiah, and of his Actions and Paſſions, were prefigured and foretold by *the Law and the Prophets, and the Pſalms,* Luk. 24 44

i. e. in the Volume of the Old Teſtament.

And all things foretold or prefigured concerning the Meſſiah, were accompliſhed by himſelf.

So that though the great Works of Chriſt, and the purity and excellency of his Doctrine, and of his Life, were of themſelves ſufficient to juſtifie the Introduction of his Law into the World, yet he was pleaſed to reſolve (as it were) his own Authority into the Divine Authority of the Old Teſtament, and to make uſe of thoſe other manifeſtations of himſelf, in a co-ordination with that principle.

And therefore we find him ſtill preſſing the *Jews* with this, that if they did believe the Writings of *Moſes*, and their other Scriptures, they muſt of neceſſity believe him alſo.

Moſes

Moſes wrote of me (ſaith he) *wherefore, did ye believe Moſes, ye would believe me. The Scriptures teſtifie of me,* therefore *ſearch them* diligently, ἐρευνᾶτε τὰς γραφὰς. For the attaining of everlaſting life he refers the Lawyer to the Law, *What is written in the Law? how readeſt thou?* For the avoiding of the place of torments, he makes *Abraham* refer the Relations of *Dives* to *Moſes* and the Prophets. Joh. 5.46. Joh. 5.39. Luk.10.26. Luk 16.29

In all his diſputations with the Phariſees and Sadducees, the Lawyers and the Scribes, he makes his appeal to the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament. And leſt any one ſhould think that in all this he did only argue *ad homines* (that diſputing with the Jews he only proceeded upon their own Hypotheſis) we find him in the courſe of his Miniſtration poſitively aſſerting

Mar.14. 49. Joh. 10. 35. Mat.3 31. Mar.5.18. ing, that the Scriptures *muſt be fulfilled*; that they *cannot be broken*; that he *came not to deſtroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfil them*; and that *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, before one jot or title of theſe ſhould periſh, until all was fulfilled.* Thus he aſſerted the Authority of the Old Teſtament before his death.

And after his Reſurrection he made a real demonſtration that the Old Teſtament was given by inſpiration of God; for on the day of his Reſurrection, falling into company of two of his Diſciples, going to *Emmaus*: *He began at Moſes and all the Prophets, and expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himſelf.*

Luk. 24. 27.

And afterward when the Eleven were come together, as a recapitulation of this his method, and

and that he might inſtruct his Diſciples in it, he ſaid unto them, *Theſe were the words which I ſpake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things muſt be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moſes, and in the Prophets, and in the Pſams* (in the Volume of the Old Teſtament) *concerning me. He opened their underſtandings, and ſaid, thus it is written, and thus it behoved*: And as a ſhort Idea of what they were to do, he tells them, and *ye are Witneſſes of theſe things.* Verſe 44.

2. In purſuance of this method we find the Evangeliſts very curious, and very frequent in obſerving the accompliſhment of the predictions of the Old Teſtament, reciting ſometimes the ſpeeches of Chriſt, ſaying, that he did ſuch, or ſuch a thing, to the end that the

the Scriptures might be fulfilled: *I will not eat of the fruit of the Vine till all things be fulfilled.*

Sometimes in their own Persons observing the accomplishment of particulars, and noting either particular portions of Scriptures which were fulfilled, or the fulfilling of the Scriptures cited at large, without any particular Quotation. Thus the Evangelists writing of
Mat. 1 22. the Conception, Nativity, Name
Mat. 2. 15. of Christ, of his coming out of
Mat. 2. 23. *Egypt*, dwelling at *Nazareth*, mi-
4. 14. gration to *Capernaum*, riding to
21. 4. *Jerusalem*; Say, that *these things were done that the Scriptures* (or the saying of the Prophet) at large *might be fulfilled*: So likewise for the circumstances of his Passion, the
Mat. 26. 56. flight of his Disciples, casting lots
27. 35. upon his Garments, Vinegar gi-
Joh 19 24.
Joh 19. 29. ven him to drink, piercing his side,

ſide, bones remaining unbroken, *&c.* Verſ. 37. 36.

Other times they note the particular Prophet, Chriſt healed Diſeaſes, ſpoke in Parables, *that the ſaying of Iſaiah the Prophet might be fulfilled.* When *Herod* ſlew the Children, *then was fulfilled that which was ſpoken by Jeremy the Prophet, Rachel weeping for her Children, &c.* and once we find a quotation of the ſecond *Pſalm*, and the like: This for the Evangeliſts. Mat. 8.17. Mat. 13.15 Mat. 2.17. Act. 13.33.

3. Laſtly, the Divine Authority of the Old Teſtament is aſſerted by the Apoſtles: Whom we find every where in their Writings, citing the Teſtimonies of the Law and the Prophets, and the Pſalms; appealing to them, *what ſaith the Scripture?* the *Scripture hath concluded* ſo or ſo: Arguing Gal. 3.10. Act. 7 42. Act 1. 22. & 13. 33. Rom. 4 3. Gal. 3.22.

guing out of them, oft times directly; thus not only the Apoſtles
Acts 18. 24. 28. but *Apollos mightily convinced the Jews*, ſometimes *ab abſurdo*,
Jam. 4. 5. *do ye think the Scripture ſpeaks in vain?*

In a word, the Apoſtles followed the way and method which their Maſter taught them; they aſſerted that the Goſpel was *promiſed*
Rom. 1. 1. *by the Prophets, witneſſed by*
Rom 3. 21. Act. 13. 18. *the Law and the Prophets: by all*
& 10. 43. *the Prophets.* Affirming of themſelves,
Act. 24. 14. that they *believed all things written in the Law and in the Prophets*: and that *they continued teſti-*
Act. 26. 28. *fying and ſaying no other things than the Prophets and Moſes did ſay ſhould come.*

Finally, leſt any place ſhould be left for doubting concerning any part of the Old Teſtament, the Apoſtles have expreſly aſſert-
Rom. 7 12. ed concerning the *Law*, that it *is holy*,

holy, juſt, and good; that the *Prophets* are *holy*, *and the Scriptures holy*; that they are *the Oracles of God*, *lively Oracles*; that *God ſpake by the Prophets*; that *holy men of God ſpake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*. Laſtly, (in the Text) that the ἱερὰ γράμματα, *wherein Timothy had been inſtituted by his Mother, were given by inſpiration of God.* Act. 3. 21. Tim 3.15. Rom. 3. 2. Act. 7.38. Act. 3. 21. 2 Pet. 1. 21. 2 Tim. 3. 15.

This is the ſenſe of the New Teſtament concerning the Old Teſtament; ſuppoſing therefore the Truth of the New Teſtament, the Divine Authority of the Old Teſtament is to be acknowledged, contrary to the firſt Opinion of the Antiſcripturiſts.

II. The Second Antiſcriptural Opinion is of thoſe who pretend to believe the Truth, but they deny or doubt the Divine Authority of the New Teſtament, either

ther of the whole body of the New Testament, or at least of that part which delivers the Speeches and Writings of the Apostles.

Of this sort there are said to be many, who by the power and influence of their Education are restrained from denying or dis-believing the Truth of the New Testament, and yet through the infelicity of corrupt conversation are fallen from that Veneration which is due to writings supposed to be of Divine Authority.

For the History of the New Testament they have the same respect which they have for *Tacitus* or *Sallust*, or some such other History; for the Mystery of the Gospel, the same which they have for some part of *Plato*, or remnants of *Pythagoras*; for the practical parts, the same which they have

have for ſome parts of *Cicero* or *Seneca*, or *Epictetus*. All which writings they believe to be true, but no man believes them to be Divine. And ſome there are who pretend a great veneration for the ſpeeches of Chriſt, but have a meaner eſteem for the words, and writings of the Apoſtles.

In oppoſition to theſe opinions, I ſhall ſhew, that ſuppoſing the words of Chriſt and the Apoſtles to be True, it will follow, that they are to be eſteemed to be of Divine Authority.

Becauſe Chriſt and the Apoſtles did profeſs and declare, that what they delivered to the world, was of Divine Authority.

And becauſe our Lord Chriſt did undertake not only for himſelf, but for the Inſpiration of his Apoſtles alſo.

1. In the examination of the next Opinion, I ſhall be obliged to lay before you ſome of the evidences of Divine Authority in Chriſt and his Apoſtles, here it is ſufficient to produce their aſſertions of it.

The time of our Lord Chriſts miniſtration (betwixt three and four years) was ſpent in preaching and working, and his Authority was often queſtioned.

Matth.21. 23. Mar.11.27. In *Luke* 20. 1. and in the parallel places, *While he was in the Temple teaching the People, and preaching the the Goſpel, the Chief Prieſts and the Scribes and the Elders came upon him, ſaying, tell us by what Authority thou doſt theſe things* (preacheſt to the people,) *and who gave thee that Authority?*

Knowing the perverſeneſs of their minds, he was not pleaſed to

to gratifie them at that time with a direct anſwer, but confounded them with a queſtion concerning the Baptiſm of *John*.

But at other times, upon other occaſions, we find the Divine Authority of his teaching abundantly declared and aſſerted by him.

I am the way, the truth and the life: The words which I ſpeak unto you they are ſpirit, and they are life. Joh. 14.6. Joh. 6.63.

The words which I ſpeak, I ſpeak not of my ſelf, but of the Father which dwelleth in me. John 14. 10.

My Doctrine is not mine, but his that ſent me. Joh. 7.16.

I do nothing of my ſelf, but as my Father hath taught me ſo I ſpeak. Joh. 8.28.

I have not ſpoken of my ſelf, but the Father that ſent me, he gave me a Commandment what I ſhould ſay, and what I ſhould ſpeak. Whatſoever I ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak. John 12. 49. John 12. 50.

Heaven and Earth ſhall Matth. 24.

pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

Thus did our Saviour assert the Divine Authority of his Words.

2. And so likewise the Apostles are very frequent in asserting the Divine Authority of the things which they delivered.

In the 15. of the *Acts*, we find them assembled about the question of Circumcision; and they accounted it no robbery to entitle their Decrees to the Holy Ghost, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us*, v. 18.

Nor do they pretend to revelation when gathered in Council only, but each one severally for himself.

St. *Peter* professes of himself, that
1 Pet. 5. 1. he was a *partaker of the glory which*
1 Pet. 1. 5. *was revealed*: And of *his Gospel*, that *it was revealed from Heaven.*

St. *John*

St. *John* declares that he had κοινωνίαν *with the Father and the Son*; as for his other writings, that they contained the things which he *had heard and ſeen with his eyes which he had looked on, and his hands had handled of the Word of life.* 1 John 1. 3. 1 Joh. 1. 1.

As for the Apocalypſe, he profeſſes, that *being in the Spirit in Iſle of Patmos* he received it, and was commanded to *write it in a Book.* Apoc. 1 9. 10. Ibid. 19.

The greateſt writer among the Apoſtles was St. *Paul*, and the greateſt queſtion hath always been (amongſt Unbelievers) concerning his Calling and the Authority of his Goſpel.

He knew this very well, and therefore we find him aſſerting both his Calling and his Goſpel with abundant care and diligence.

He affims himſelf to have been

Gal. 1.1. *an Apostle not of man, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the*
Rom. 1. 1. *Father*; That *by God* himself *he was separated to preach*, constituted a
2 Tim. 1 1. *Preacher*, an *Apostle*, and a *defender*
Phil. 1.17. *of the Gospel.* As concerning his
Eph. 3. 1. Gospel, he professes to have *received it by Revelation of God.*

As for the Spirit wherewith he wrote and preached, he professed himself ready to *give a proof of Christ*
2 Cor. 13. 3. *speaking in him.* He appealed to the Prophetick Spirit then in the Church, *If any man think himself a*
1 Cor. 14. 37. *Prophet or Spiritual, let him acknowledge the things which I write to be the Commandments of God.*

Out of this assurance it was that he enjoyned his Epistles *to be read*
Col. 4. 16. *in the Churches of Coloss, Laodicea,*
Ibid. *Thessalonica,* and excommunicates
2 Thes. 3. 14. such as should be disobedient in that particular.

And

And leſt any one ſhould here repeat the Objection made againſt our Saviour, *Thou beareſt witneſs of thyſelf, thy witneſs is not true.*

St. *Paul* ſpeaking of all the Apoſtles, affirms that *God had ſet them in the Church,* and that the *Myſtery of the Goſpel* was *revealed to the holy Apoſtles by the Spirit.* Eph. 4. 11. 3. 5.

Particularly notwithſtanding that diſpute betwixt St. *Peter* and St. *Paul* (from the firſt Ages of the Church to our own Times, objected by Unbelievers to the prejudice of Religion) it is remarkable, that, in the ſame place where St. *Paul* gives an account how *Peter was to be blamed,* and how and wherefore he *withſtood him to his face at Antioch,* he doth expreſly affirm, that *the Goſpel of the Circumciſion was committed to Peter,* and that *God wrought effectually in* Porphyr. Hier. Præm. Galat. & in c. 2. Celſus. Gal. 2.

Peter to the Apostleship of the Circumcision.

On the other side St. *Peter*, in that very place, where he may seem to complain of the Δυσνόητα of St. *Paul*, yet even there he owns him as his *beloved Brother*, acknowledges his *Wisdom* to have been *given him of God*, and numbers all his Epistles, *inter* τὰς λοιπὰς γραφὰς amongst *the other Scriptures*.

2 Pet. 3. 15.

3. Lastly, For such as would put a difference of degrees betwixt the Authority of the words of Christ, and the writings and Sermons of the Apostles, they may take notice, that the Authority of these resolves it self into the veracity of Christ himself.

He it was, who being to leave the World, promised his Disciples again and again, that he would *send down upon them the Holy Spirit*, that

John. 15. 26.

that ſhould *inſtruct* them *and teach them all things*, that ſhould *Lead them into all truth*, *Bring to their remembrance all things which he himſelf had ſpoken*, that ſhould *ſhew them things to come*, that with this Spirit they ſhould not be lightly daſh'd, or ſprinkled, but that they ſhould be *Baptized*, and as it were plunged *into* it. 14. 26. 16. 13. 14. 26. 16. 13. Act. 1. 5.

How all theſe promiſes were performed, and how the Aſſertions of the Divine Authority of the Words of Chriſt, and the Apoſtles were proved to be true, I am next to ſhew. In the interim I conclude that ſuppoſing the truth of the words of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, they are to be eſteemed of Divine Authority.

III. The third opinion is of ſuch as pretend to believe matters of fact to have been truly related in

in the New Testament, but they do not believe the truth of the Doctrinal parts relating to Faith or Manners.

Of these there have always been too great a number, not only pretenders, who under a form of Christianity deny the power thereof, but generally all sorts of Hereticks. When *Porphyrius* had revolted from Christianity to Platonism, and had bent all his forces against the Scripture-History, he was refuted not only by *Lactantius*, and *Methodius*, men Orthodox in Doctrine, but by *Eusebius* and *Apollinaris*; and of late days, *Socinus* and others have well asserted the truth of the Scripture-History, who yet have been offended at the dogmatical parts of the Gospel, and concerning the Faith have made shipwrack.

In

In Oppoſition to theſe I ſhall endeavour to demonſtrate, that, Suppoſing Matters of Fact to be truly related in the New Teſtament, it is unreaſonable to ſuſpect the truth of any of the Doctrines delivered by Chriſt or his Apoſtles.

Amongſt the various fancies concerning Religion, wherewith the whole world hath been always embroiled: Two things there are wherein all the Sons of Adam have agreed; namely, 1. That that is to be believed which hath received the teſtimony of God. And 2. That this Teſtimony is to be gathered from inſtances of ſupernatural Wiſdom and Power.

In the ſtudy of natural and Philoſophical Theology, the *Speculativi* amongſt the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and other Nations, ſought after

after wisdom, (Reason, and Demonstration.) But, to reduce the People to the forms of religious Rites and Sacrifices prescribed them, they were made to believe the Epiphanies of the Gods, and the manifestations of their Wisdom, and Power, by Oracles and Works supernatural.

To these even *Mahomet* pretended, though his great Argument was from the Sword: and of the Jews I need not speak.

For a Foundation of Religion, and in our inquisition after that, short of this Testimony we ought not to stay; further we cannot go: And herein is the utmost of humane wisdom to consider well those Evidences upon which we adventure the interest of our eternity.

To this evidence therefore we appeal

peal in aſſerting the Doctrine of our Lord Chriſt, and his Apoſtles; Namely to the inſtances of Supernatural Knowledge and Supernatural Power, whereby their Doctrine was atteſted.

I ſhall not here wave the force, but I ſhall decline the repetition of what I have formerly ſpoken concerning the atteſtations given to it by Viſible Signs, Audible Voices, Apparitions of Angels, Fulfilling the Prophecies, Evidences of Chriſts Reſurreſtion, Miſſion of the Holy Ghoſt.

In *Joh.* 7. 15. the Jews wondred at Chriſt that he knew any thing: *How knoweth this man Letters, ſeeing he never learned them?* but if we mark the Scriptures, we ſhall find that *he knew all things*, and that nothing was withdrawn from the reach of his underſtanding.

He

Joh. 11. 11. He knew the ſickneſs and death of *Lazarus*, though abſent and at a
4. 17. diſtance; He *ſaw Nathaniel under the Fig-tree*, and convinced him that he was the *Son of God, and the*
Joh. 4. 29. *King of Iſrael: Come ſee a man* (ſaid the Woman of *Samaria*) *which told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Chriſt?*

Joh. 6. 61. He was Καρδιογνώστης. The ſecret
64. murmurs at his hard ſayings, the
16. 16. inward deſires to ask him Que-
Luk. 9. 47. ſtions; the Reaſonings and dialogiſms of the hearts of his Diſciples;
Mat. 12. the ſecret Councils of the Scribes
15. 25
Mar. 2. 8. and Phariſees, their evil ſurmiſings,
Luk. 6. 8. their treacherous intentions to in-
Luk. 11. 17. trap him, their mental Blaſphemy, were all naked and manifeſt before him.

Joh. 2. 24. *He knew what was in man, and*
25. *needed not that any one ſhould tell*
Mat. 17. 21. *him*; He knew the various Kinds of

of *Devils*, and how they were to be ejected: *This Kind cometh not out but by Prayer and Faſting.* He knew the Fiſhes of the Sea, and where they were, and what was in them. Mat. 17. 21. Mat. 17. 27.

He knew not only things paſt and preſent, but to come; He foreſaw *all things that were to come upon him, who it was that ſhould betray him*, he foretold his Diſciples all the circumſtances of his Paſſion, how he was to be *Betrayed, Condemned, delivered to the Gentiles, mocked, ſcourged, ſpit on, kill'd and Crucified at Jeruſalem.* Joh. 18.4. 11.11. 13.11. Mat. 20. 18. Mar. 10. 23. Mat. 16. 21. Joh. 14.28.

Behold, ſaith he, *I tell you before; Let this ſaying ſink into your hearts.* He forewarned *Peter* of his denyal, and the Diſciples of their flight. Luk. 19. 44. Mat 26. 34. 31.

He foretold things to come after his death, the time and manner

of

of the destruction of *Jerusalem*: The success of his Gospel, the Effect (unlikely) of his Crucifixion, that
John 12. 32. it should *draw all men after him*, that
Matth. 24. 14. it *should be preached and believed in the*
Matth 13. 31. *whole world*, spreading it self *like Leaven*, and *like a grain of Mustard-*
Luke 10. 18. *seed*, that Satans Kingdom should be destroyed suddenly *like lightning*; notwithstanding the *false*
Matth. 24. 15. *Christs and false Prophets which should arise.*

These and many more were instances of the supernatural knowledge of Christ: And for his power, the time would fail me to insist upon the many and various instances mentioned in the Gospels.

I shall omit the exercise of his dominion over the Sun, Moon, and Stars, Plants, and Animals, Earth, and Water, the Wind and the

Sea

Sea, and briefly mind you of those which concerned the bodies of men; how he 1. Fed their hunger, 2. Healed their distempers, 3. Raised their dead, and 4. Cast out Devils.

He fed 4000 at one time, and 5000 at another, with 5 or 7 Loaves, and a few little Fishes. Matth 14. 19. 15. 36. Matth. 15. 30.

He healed the blind, lame, deaf, dumb, maimed, feaverish, hydropical, paralytick, leprous, and lunatick persons. He cured not green wounds only, but ancient inveterate Maladies of 12, of 38 years continuance, one that was born blind. 9. 27. 4. 23. Mat. 8 14. Mar. 14. 4. Mat. 4. 13. Mar. 17. 12. Mat. 4 23. Luk. 22. 51 Mat. 9. 2. John 5. 5.

He used no Plasters nor Potions, no Telesmans or other Charms, but performed all these things by a touch of his Hand or of his Garment. He healed absent persons as well as present, he spoke *Multos.* Mat. 9 20. Mat. 8. 6. John 5. 5

the word only and they were healed.

Mar. 5. 41. Luk 7. 11. John 11. 39. Matth 27. 52. He raised to life the Daughter of *Jairus*, the Widows Son at *Naim*, his Friend *Lazarus*, and many bodies of the Saints. Many of which healed and raised persons lived till about *Trajan's* time, as *Quadratus* a Disciple of the Apostles affirmed in his Apology to *Hadrian* the Emperour.

Euf. Eccl. H. l. 4. c. 3. 3 37. Annot 1. 81

Like a strong man armed he cast out Devils, whatever kind they were of he quickly disloged them; that *foaming and tearing Devil* which withstood the power of his Disciples, and threw down and tore the possessed person even as he was yet coming to Christ himself; he presently *rebuked, and healed the child, and delivered him to his Father.*

Mat. 17. 18

Neither their long possession, nor

nor their numbers could ſecure them, he caſt ſeven at once out of *Mary Magdalen*, and an whole Legion out of a certain man of the Countrey of the *Gadarens*, who had been poſſeſſed by them a long time. Mar. 16. 9. Luk. 8. 27.

Moreover, for atteſtation to the truth of his Goſpel, he delegated all this power to others, to the 12 Apoſtles, to the 70 Diſciples: He bequeathed it to Believers at his death, and they alſo received and exerciſed this ſupernatural power. Mat. 10. 7. Luk. 9. 3. Luke 10. 1.—9. Mat. 16. 17.

I have given a few inſtances of the Supernatural Wiſdom and Power of Chriſt ſolitarily conſidered: The Hiſtory of the Goſpel affords us many Examples wherein they were gloriouſly combined.

By his Knowledge he foretold

Matth. 16. 21. Mar. 28. 2. John 16. 16, 28. 20. 17. Luke 24. 57. his Resurrection, he performed it by his Power. By his Divine Understanding he foresaw his Ascension, and by the Power of his Divinity he ascended.

He ascended, and by his power he fulfilled the Predictions and Promises which he had made. He Acts 2. 4. sent down the Holy Spirit, and shed forth the gifts of supernatural Wisdom and Power upon his Apostles.

Not to mention the Apparition Acts 9. of Angels, and of Christ himself, Act 10. 10. 22. 17. the Bath Kol, the Extasies, Dreams, Acts 16. 9. 16. 6, 7. Visions, and Impulses which were given them for their own assurance: That they might be enabled to preach the Gospel to all Nations, and deliver to the world those Scriptures whereof we are speaking, they had the word of Knowledge 1 Cor. 12. 9 and of Wisdom and of Faith, and the

the gift of divers Tongues, and interpretation of Tongues bestowed upon them.

And to justifie their Doctrine to the Ages present and to come, they had the Gifts of Prophesie, and of Healing, and of Miracles.

John (the beloved Disciple) *heard a voice as it were of a Trumpet, talking with him, which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which shall be hereafter*; and immediately he *was in the Spirit*, and received the Revelation. Ap. 4. 1.

Paul an Apostle (though *born out of due time*) *came to Visions and Revelation*, he twice foretold what should happen to the Ship wherein he was carried Prisoner to Rome. He foretold the Apostacy of the latter times, the rising of Antichrist, the *perillous times* which *should come upon the* Acts 27. 10 22. 2 Cor. 12. 1 1 Thes. 2. 2 Tim. 3. 1.

World

Act. 11.8. 21.10. Act. 5.13 *world in the last days. Agabus* a Believer at large foretold the *Famine which was to come upon all the world*, and the binding of *Paul* at *Jerusalem*, &c.

But the instances of supernatural Power exercised in healing of Diseases, raising the dead, confounding the Opposers of their Doctrine, and in several other kinds by the Apostles and their Companions and Adherents, the Preachers and Writers of the Doctrine of the Gospel, are so abundantly delivered in the New Testament, that I shall not offer at particulars.

In the 4. of the *Acts* we find all the Apostles praying ὁμοθυμαδὸν that God would *stretch forth his hand to heal, and that signs and wonders might be done by the Name of his holy Child Jesus. And immediately*

the

the place was ſhaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Goſt, and with Power.

The particular Miracles of particular perſons are recorded. In one word, they went and preached every where the Doctrines which are written in the Goſpel; the *Lord working with them, and confirming their words by mighty ſigns and wonders*, and giſts of the Holy Ghoſt. Marc. 16. 20.

This is the ſtate of the matter of Fact, as it is propounded in the New Teſtament: I conclude therefore, that, ſuppoſing matters of Fact to be truly delivered in the New Teſtament, there is no reaſon to doubt of the Doctrines delivered by Chriſt or his Apoſtles, relating to faith or manners. And I come to the conſideration of the laſt and extream Opinion of the Antiſcripturiſts.

IV. The laſt opinion, is of thoſe who deny the truth of the Relation of matters of Fact delivered in the New Teſtament, and in conſequence reject the whole body of the Scriptures.

I could wiſh there were no ſuch as theſe, and that what I have yet to ſay were altogether needleſs for that reaſon.

But what mean then the publick Rumors which we hear? and whence is an Opinion gone into the world, that ſome great Philoſophers and men of generous reaſon are diſſatisfied concerning the truth of Scripture, and believe the Authority of it to be wholy derived from the Magiſtrate?

In reference to theſe I ſhall endeavour,

1. Briefly, to ſhew that the ground upon which theſe Wiſemen and

and Philosophers reject the Scriptures, is contrary to the Reason of mankind.

2. To evince, that the belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures is most agreeable to Reason.

1. As for the Argument and ground of those (amongst us Christians) that reject the body of the Scriptures, I do not remember to have heard of other than this.

They have often called upon Believers, Pastors perhaps, or Doctors in the Church, for a clear and undeniable evidence of the truth of the story of the Gospel, and they have not afforded it: therefore they conclude, the Scriptures are to be rejected.

But is this the reasoning of generous wits? and men of mighty deeds

deeds in disputation, of men pretending to the depths of reason and Philosophy?

To give a man a clear and undeniable evidence of any thing, there are but two ways, *viz.* To convince either his Senses or his Understanding; the former whereof is to be done by experiment, the later by demonstration.

Would they have now an Experiment whether such or such a thing were done 16 or 17 hundred years ago? Would they have a demonstration of particulars, in their nature indifferent to be done or not to be done, depending upon the liberty of Causes?

Well were it for the world, if these *Beaux Esprits* would have the patience, and endure the fatigue of acquainting themselves with the ways of knowledge (Experiment

periment and demonſtration) it would not then be troubled with the dangerous impertinency of ſuch Pretenders.

Then theſe men would not call for Experiment in a ſubject uncapable of it, and (being inſtructed that demonſtration is only of Univerſal Propoſitions *in materia neceſſaria*, whoſe contrary Poſitions imply a contradiction) they would know, that to demand this kind of evidence of the truth of the ſtory of the Goſpel, is to be abſurdly injudicious, and to act contrary to the Reaſon of mankind.

For ſeeing we may not with civility ſuppoſe this principle to be advanced only for the deſtruction of Religion, and the ruine (or at leaſt undeniable hazard) of the Souls of men; We ought to believe that theſe Philoſophers intend this as

as a General Maxim; "that (in mat-
"ters at leaſt of moment) men
"ought not to adventure to act,
"but upon clear and undeniable
"evidence, and (ſpeaking pro-
perly) that wiſe men ought to
believe nothing at all. Where-
fore let us ſuppoſe this for a ge-
neral principle, and conſider what
will follow.

Setting aſide the knowledge of the Affections of a few Lines and Numbers, is not all learning to be caſt away? Muſt not the Civil world of mankind be brought to ſwift confuſion? muſt not mankind it ſelf, in a few days come to an end?

Suppoſe a ſubject ſhould not yield his Obedience, or a Tenant his Rent, till Titles be made out by Experiment or demonſtation. Suppoſe the husbandman and the Mer-

Merchant, the Artificer, the Souldier, the Banker, and the Judge ſhould not adventure, but ſtay for the aſſurance of Experiment or Demonſtration, would not the whole world be confounded? *Ariſt. polit. l. 7. c. 8.*

Suppoſe men ſhould not marry, nor take Phyſick, nor eat or drink till they ſhould have clear and undeniable evidence, that all theſe things are what they ſuppoſe, and ſhall ſucceed according to expectation, would not mankind quickly be ſpent, and brought to an end?

If the management of all humane concernments, Political, Oeconomical, Perſonal, proceed upon the grounds of Belief and Hope, and rational (but not demonſtrative) inference. If neither theſe Philoſophers (if they would conſider) nor any other Perſon, either ever did, or poſſibly could, perform any one

one action, upon such evidence, as these men require concerning the truth of the stories of the Scripture, then to reject them for want of such evidence, is repugnant to the Reason of mankind.

I proceed therefore to my second assertion, that the Belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures is most agreable to reason.

That the Divine Authority of all the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, are undeniably concluded from supposition of the truth of the Relation or History of matters of fact in the New Testament, I have already shewn. And that the rejection of all History is against the Reason of mankind is evident, because all mankind receive some History or other: wherefore I shall briefly shew,

1. That

1. That the History of the New Testament hath all those advantages whereof any History is capable.

2. That it hath greater advantages than any other History.

1. The Arguments inducing men to the belief of any historical Relation, are all of them

Either
- *Ab intra*, Internal, from the 1. Credibility and Scibility of the Object. 2. The Knowledge and Integrity of the Writers. 3. The way and manner of writing.
- *Ab extra*, External, from the 1. Reception of it in the world. 2. Concurrent testimonies of strangers. 3. Concessions of Adversaries, and the like.

In all which particulars, no History in the world can justly pretend any

any advantage above that of the New Teſtament.

1. For the credibility of the Object, and Cognoſcibility of it.

Ob. ſol. 1. To ſay that inſtances of ſupernatural Power and wiſdom are impoſſible, is to deny the power of God and his providence in governing the world: And to ſay that ſuch things are incredible, as are and have been actually believed, in all times, and by all ſorts of perſons, Jews and Gentiles, Chriſtians and Mahometans (a few Atheiſtical perſons only accepted) is an abſurdity.

The Hiſtory that we ſpeak of, pretends to no intrigues or Cabaliſtick Counſels, or Myiſteries of State, but conteins it ſelf within the limits of things Viſible and Audible, things that were done or ſpoken

ſpoken; ſo that no Hiſtory can have advantage over it, *reſpectu Objecti.*

2. As for Knowledge in the deliverers, I ſhall ſhew it by a brief Induction.

The whole New Teſtament conſiſts of the Books of the Revelation, Epiſtles, Acts of the Apoſtles, and the Goſpels.

The Authors of the Epiſtles and the Revelation, in the Narrative parts of them, deliver the things done or ſpoken to or by themſelves, and could not be ignorant of their own experiences.

The Book of the Acts contains ſome things done by or to the reſt of the Apoſtles, but chiefly the concernments of *Paul*; and it was written by *Luke*, who was an individual Companion of *Paul*, and intimately converſant with the reſt of the Apoſtles.

For the things Related in the Gospel of St. *Luke*, he saith they were delivered to him by those who from the beginning were *Eye witnesses* of the works, *and Ministers of the Word*, and his History agrees with the other Evangelists.

The Gospel of St. *Mark* hath nothing which is not in St. *Matthew* or St. *John*, and was dictated by St. *Peter*, the Head of the Apostles.

St. *Matthew* was an Apostle, and St. *John* the Bosom Apostle of Christ. The Apostles were chosen by him for Witnesses of his Words and Actions, they were with him from the beginning of his Ministry, continued with him till his death, conversed with him till his ascen-

1 Joh. 1. 1. sion; *That which they had heard, which they had seen with their Eyes, which*

they

they had looked on, which their hands had handled of the word of life, that they delivered in writing to the World: And more than this no Writer or Relater of History can pretend to.

2. For Arguments of their sincerity, they have left Precepts of Veracity, and prohibitions of lying, under pain of Hell torments, the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: They have protested that *they did not follow cunningly devised Fables*; that they did things *sincerely as in the sight of God.* 1 Cor. 5. 8. 6. 4. 8. Phil. 4. 8. Jam. 3. 14. Eph. 4. 25. Apoc. 21. 8. 27. 22. 15. 2 Pet. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 2. 17

They have appealed to the searcher of hearts: *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knoweth that I lie not. The things which I write unto you, behold, before God I lye not, Gal.* 1. 20. saith St. *Paul.* 2 Cor. 11. 31.

1 Theſ. 2. 3. 4. They have left behind them various inſtances of their ſimplicity and Godly ſincerity in repreſenting their failings to the world, and of candour and ingenuity in diſtinguiſhing the dictates of their own Reaſon from the inſpirations of the Holy Spirit: *I ſpeak by permiſſion, not by commandment of the Lord: This ſay I, not the Lord*; Thus it is *according to my judgment &c.* 1 *Cor.* 7.

But beſides all this, let the matter be eſtimated according to common reaſon: If theſe men did deviſe a Fable and impoſe it upon the world, what end could they propound to themſelves in ſo doing? was there any profit in being deſtitute of all things? or pleaſure in being perſecuted, afflicted, and tormented? or honour in being counted Fools and Madmen. Before

Before they began to publish the Stories whereof we speak, their Master was gone, and all worldly hopes were gone away with him: If they were not bound in Conscience, and in Spirit; what obligation had he laid upon them to labour and suffer for his honour as they did?

To omit the severity of his behaviour to them, He called them off from their Vocations, *Peter*, and *Andrew*, *James*, and *John* from their Fishing, *Matthew* from his Customers place, the rest accordingly. Mar. 9. 9.

They forsook their Nets, their Ships, their Relations, and all their interests, *and followed him.* Mat. 4. 20. 22.

And this they did (clearly and plainly) believing that he was to be a Great Temporal Prince, and in hopes of preferment under

him. In this Expectation they continued to the laſt minute of his converſation with them upon Earth, and he permitted them ſo to do.

Act. 1.6. Their laſt words to him were delivered in this queſtion, *Lord wilt thou at this time reſtore the Kingdom unto Iſrael?* Of the thing it ſelf they never doubted, they only deſire to be informed of the time,

Now after ſo long expectation? Conſider his Anſwer.

His Anſwer was this, *It is not for you to know the times*, &c. *but ye ſhall receive power when the Holy Ghoſt is come upon you, and ye ſhall be witneſſes of me unto the utmoſt parts of the earth*; and immediately he vaniſhed away.

Was this an anſwer to their Queſtion? or a ſatisfaction to their expectation

expectation? Was this an Obligation laid upon them? If he had not sent down the Holy Ghost, this would have moved them indeed, but it would have been to rage and indignation; this would have obliged them indeed, but it would have been to detest and abhor the name and memory of him that had abused them. But for the honour of his name, not their own, they did and suffered all things, and gloried in it. An irrefragable argument of their sincerity in the things which they delivered.

3. Of the internal Arguments for the belief of History, there remains only the Consideration of the way and manner of writing.

Histories then carry their own credentials in them, when the principal parts of them are delivered

with such circumstances of times, places, and persons, as may render them liable to Examination, and Refutation, if they contain any falshood in them.

And in this particular, no History hath any advantage over that History whereof we are speaking, as will be evident to him that considers it throughout.

Concerning *John* the Baptist, it
Luk. 1.5. is recorded, that he was born some few Months before Christ, that his Mother was *Elizabeth*, that his Father was *Zachariah*, a Priest of the Course of *Abia*, that they lived in the *Hill-Countrey*.

He began to preach in the 15. of
Luk. 3.1. *Tiberius*, *Pilate* being Governour of *Judæa*, *Herod* Tetrarch of *Galilee*, his Brother *Philip* Tetrarch of *Iturea*, and of the Region of *Trachonitis*, and *Lysanias* Tetrarch of *Abilene*

lene. Punctual and particular. Mat. 14.3.

Soon after this he was Impriſoned and Beheaded by *Herod*, for reprehending him about *Herodias*, all which were matters of Fact, very eaſie, if falſe, to have been refuted. *Vide Joſeph. Ant.* 18.c.9.10. Luk 3.1.

Concerning Chriſt, his birth is ſtated to have been at a time the moſt remarkable that ever was, when the whole world was taxed by *Auguſtus*, in the days of *Herod*, when *Cyrenius* was Governour of *Syria*; the place eaſie to be enquired of, it was in a Manger, in an Inn, Mat. 4.6. in a Town that was a little one Mic. 5.2. among the thouſands of *Juda*, eaſie to be examined.

When he was about 30 years old, he was Baptized of *John*, and Luk. 3.23. within a few days after he called his Apoſtles; and in leſs than four yeears ſpace he performed all his mighty Works, whereof I ſhall mention

mention only some few particulars.

Joh. 2. 1. 11. At *Cana* in *Galilee* he turned Water into Wine, at a Wedding, where Mat. 9. 18. was much company. He raised Mat. 8. 6. the Daughter of *Jairus*, the Ruler of the Synagogue, there was but one in that place, she was his only Daughter, and about twelve Luk. 7. 2. years Old. He healed the Servant of that Centurion that had built a Synagogue. Can any thing be more particular?

Joh. 11. 18. At *Bethany*, fifteen Furlongs from *Jerusalem*, a few days before his death, he raised *Lazarus* after he had been dead four days. Could any thing be more examinable?

His death was at *Jerusalem*, at the time of the Passover, a time of greatest annual concourse in the world, and then it is said, that the

the Sun was darkened, the Veil rent, the Rocks torn in pieces, the Graves opened. Can any thing be more refutable than these things, if they had been false?

So likewise for the Apostles. The healing of *Æneas* at *Lydda*, Act. 9.33. raising of *Dorcas* at *Joppe*, the passages with *Cornelius* Captain of the Band called the *Italian* Band at *Cæsarea*, and many other acts of *Peter*. The increpation of *Barjesus* at *Paphos*, in the presence of *Sergius Paulus* the Governour. The healing of a Cripple at *Lystra*, in the presence of the Priest of *Jupiter*, besides many other acts of Paul, and the rest of the Apostles, are so cirumstantiated in the History, that if false they might have been very easily contradicted. 40. 10.1. 13.6. 14.13.

But besides all these, this History

ſtory contains a Narration of things done and ſaid, not only by perſons well affected but by *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, and the Roman Governours, by the Phariſees, the Scribes, the High Prieſts, and the *Sanhedrim*; all of them Enemies both to the Hiſtorians and the Hiſtory; and if any of theſe things had had been convicted of falſhood, would not the credit of the whole Goſpel have (at once) been utterly overthrown?

I conclude therefore, that in reſpect of internal Arguments for belief, no Hiſtory hath, or indeed can have any advantage above the Hiſtory of the New Teſtament.

2. As for External Arguments, I can but name them. Though the whole world intereſſed themſelves againſt the ſtory (ſo examinable

nable as you have heard) though the Books were extant, while the memory of things was recent, *Matthew* within ſeven years, *Mark* within eleven, *Luke* about twenty four, *poſt mortem Chriſti*; the Epiſtles of *Peter* and *Paul* within thirty years, all the reſt *intra unius hominis ætatem*, yet no man could ever convince them of falſhood.

The ſtories were received by men of the greateſt Wiſdom, Learning, and vertue amongſt the Greeks and Latines. Many of the hardeſt paſſages were atteſted and confeſſed by Enemies and Unbelievers.

The Authors owned by *Julian*: the Miracles confeſſed by *Celſus*: the checking of the operation of the Devil by *Porphyrius*: the Darkneſs and Earthquake at the death of Chriſt by *Thallus* and *Phlegon Tral-*

Cyrill c. 10. c. Jul. Orig. c. C. Euſeb. Tertio Hiſtoriarum, Citat à Julio Afr. 3. Chronogr. Orig c. C. l. 3.

15.44. *Annalium.* *Trallianus*: the Crucifixion of Christ (by *Pilate* under *Tiberius*) by *Tacitus*: And in one word, The entire Volume of the Scriptures, the very same which our Church receives (by vertue of the belief of the History of the Gospel) before any general Council, or the time of *Constantine*, without any Convocation of the Clergy, or imperial Edict for that purpose, was *instinctu quodam Christiano*, generally received by all Christians, and the world made Christians.

Athanas. Synops. Const. ad p. p. Nicen. Vide Theodoret. l. 1. c. 6. Gr. Lat. Pan.

In respect of all these Arguments, internal and external, I might have justly said, that the History of the Gospel hath the advantage of any other History; but seeing there are some particulars wherein the advantages are super-eminent, I shall speak a little of that distinctly by it self, and so conclude.

2. These

2. Theſe advantages I ſhall reduce to two heads, *Teſtimonium* { *Rei.* / *Dei.*

1. For the *Teſtimonium Rei*, conſider,

1. Oppoſition to } the Goſpel.
2. Prevailing of }

1. Never any ſtory was ſo much oppoſed as the Books and Hiſtory of the New Teſtament, by Jews and Gentiles, by the World and by the Devil.

The beginnings and propagation of the Goſpel was by the Jews maliciouſly and ſtrenuouſly oppoſed in the times of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and in all ſucceeding Generations.

Leſt *all men ſhould believe in Chriſt* (becauſe of his Miracles) *the Rulers took counſel to deſtroy him*, the People cryed out to have him Crucified. Joh 11.48.

Leſt the laſt errour (as they called it) *ſhould be worſe than the firſt*, they ſealed Matth. 27. 46.

ſealed up his Sepulchre, and ſet a watch upon it; and laſtly, *ſuborned the Souldiers to ſay, that his Diſciples came by night while they were ſleeping* (how could they know this?) *and ſtole him away.*

Acts 4. 6. That the firſt Miracle wrought by *Peter* and *John* might not ſpread among the People, the Rulers and Elders and Scribes, *Annas* and *Caiaphas*, and *John* and *Alexander*, and all the Kindred of the High Prieſt, *laid hands upon them, and put them in hold, and threatned and commanded them not to ſpeak at all in the Name of Jeſus.*

Acts 7. 57. When *Stephen* had uttered his teſtimony, the *people cryed with a loud voice, and ſtopped their Ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and caſt him out of the City, and ſtoned him.*

Acts 9. 2. Wherever they met with Believers

lievers, Men or Women, they *haled them into Priſon*, breathing out threatnings and ſlaughter. Whereever they met with the Preachers, they oppoſed and blaſphemed, they tumultuated, they *ſtirred the Gentiles*; they enraged the *chief men of the Cities* and the *honourable women* againſt them. Act. 13. 45. 14. 2. 13. 50.

The inſtances of their malicious oppoſition, in all ages of the Church, are ſo many as are not to be numbred in a few Minutes, but would require many days only to name them.

They firſt ſtirred up *Nero* to perſecute the Chriſtians, they contrived the death of *Polycarpus*, they ſtood by, and inſulted over the dying Martyrs; in a word, whoever ſhall read the ſtories of primitive times, he will find that the Jews were generally the Setters and Inſor- *Euſ. l. 4. 15*

mers against the Martyrs, and the Brokers for their Goods after execution: And the Histories of our own and other Nations will shew us the height of their malice, and the continuance of it.

Now, beside the little Nation of the Jews, the rest of the whole world, when this History began to be published and the Books written, were Heathen, universally devoted to the Devil, whom therefore our Saviour styles, *the Prince of this world.*

And now that feud which had depended betwixt the seed of the Serpent and the seed of the woman 4000 years, was by the preaching and writing of these things brought to a Crisis.

The professed and declared design of the Gospel, was to drive the Devil out of his Dominion, not-

notwithstanding the antiquity of his possession, the universality of his Church, and the consent of all Nations, whereby he held his title. Notwithstanding his Empire was supported by Governours and Laws, and fortified by the Arms and actual strength of all the world, he saw, that if the Gospel were not suppressed, a little time would spoil the pride of all his glory, that in a moment he should *fall like lightning from Heaven.*

That he should be exorcised out of the bodies which he possessed: That his famous Oracles should soon be put to silence: his gorgeous Temples and Images should be torn down, his Mysteries and lying wonders set at nought: That Prayers and Vows would be made to him no more, and he should cease to be celebrated in the Songs Deut. 7.

of his Poets, and Hymns of his *Hierophantæ*.

That his revelling Festivals would be turned to mourning, no more gifts would be presented, no beasts, nor children, women or men sacrificed upon his Altars.

The Contention was *de rerum summa (pro aris & focis)* and his rage was kindled accordingly: He summons together all his wiles and stratagems, he musters all his forces, he sounds an Alarm to the world, stirs up young and old, rich and poor, all ages, sexes, conditions, the people wise and unwise, the Common Souldiers and Commanders, Counsellors and Judges, Senate and Emperors, by suppressing these Books, and destroying the Believers of them, to erase the memory of the Gospel

Orig. c. l. 1.

ſpel, and aboliſh it for ever.

The people were enraged againſt the Believers, as againſt the common Enemy of mankind, and *pro ſolenni ſuo*, they ſlandered them with unthought of wickedneſs, they imputed to them all the calamities of the world: And required them to death: *Si Tiberis aſcendit in mœnia----Chriſtianos ad Leones---*

Againſt theſe Books, the Learned employed their Learning, and the Witty employed their Wit. *Celſus*, *Porphyrius*, *Jamblichus*, *Hierocles*, and other Philoſophers, endeavoured to diſpute them out of the world, *Symmachus* and *Libanius*, and other Rhetors to declaim them away. *Julian* and *Lucian* and other Scoptick wits, endeavoured to jeer and droll away the credit of them.

Mean while the Senators and Lawyers employ themſelves to deſtroy the Books, by ſtretching againſt them the ancient Laws againſt bringing in Foreign Religions, and againſt Magical and Fatidical Books: and to deſtroy Books and Believers by New Laws made for that purpoſe againſt Combinations (*Hetæriæ*) Sacriledge, Treaſon, the Law that none ſhould buy or ſell, or draw water without Thurification to the Gods, and the like.

Plin. Ep. 10. 97.

By force of theſe they perſecute the Believers, as Enemies to the Commonwealth, and Traytors to the Emperour, as ſacrilegious perſons, and contemners of Religion.

The people ſometimes riſing upon them without any edict, ſometimes by virtue of Edicts Imperial or Proconſular.

From

From the beginning of the Goſpel to the end of *Diocleſian* and *Maximian*, this was the ſtate of Believers.

Their Scriptures were forbidden to be read, and required to be burned; their Oratories and (obſcure) Churches were pulled in pieces; their Eſtates were plundered and confiſcate; their bodies were impriſoned and tormented; Fire and Sword, hot Iron Chairs and Coffins, Gridirons, and Cauldrons, Hooks, Stakes and Gibbets, the Teeth of Lyons, and Tygers, *&c.* were their portion.

It cannot be ſhewed, that ever any Book or ſtory met with equal Oppoſition

2. Conſider then how it prevailed, how quickly and largely, how deeply and effectually, although the Precepts were not con-

trived to ſollicit the Affections, nor the Doctrines to court the Reaſon of men.

Act. 2. 41. At one Sermon of *Peter* three thouſand, at another five thouſand were converted: Within a few years after the Death of Chriſt we find by St. *Peter*, that the 1 Pet. 1. 1. Goſpel was preached throughout *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Aſia*, *Bithynia*; and *Paul* had planted it from *Jeruſalem* round about to *Illyricum*: Beſides what was done by other Apoſtles, in the Provinces aſſigned them at the Council of *Jeruſalem*. Acts 15.

Within ſixty ſix years this grain of Muſtard ſeed was become a Tree, *Pliny* Proconſul of *Bithynia* (to whom the care of Religion, *ex officio*, did appertein) appointed by *Trajan* to ſuppreſs the Chriſtians, he writes to him, that this Belief Lib. 10. Epiſt. 10.

lief was *Longè lateq; diffuſa, Civitates, Vicos, Agros, impletos Chriſti cultoribus.*

During the ſecond Century, it had ſhot out great branches, the boughs of this Tree were ſtretched out, *Heſterni ſumus & veſtra omnia implevimus.* *Tertullian* reckons up the known parts of the World, *in quibus omnibus Chriſti nomen regnat,* and concludes, *ubiq; porrigitur, creditur, colitur, regnat, adoratur.* *Adv. Judæos, c. 7.*

And laſtly, During the third (*à morte Chriſti*) *the Fowls of the air, and Beaſts of the field lodged under the ſhadow of it*: The Net drew good and bad to ſhore; the Roman Emperour and Empire declared themſelves Chriſtians, *i. e.* Believers and Aſſertors of theſe Books: *So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed.* Act. 19. 20.

It went on conquering and to con-

conquer, not by the Spirit of the Sword, but by the Sword of the Spirit; the powers of the Earth, and the gates of Hell could not withstand it; it drove the Devil away with all his Temples, Idols, Oracles, Priests, Sacrifices, Services, like lightning: So fell the Dragon, the old Serpent that deceived the World, he was cast out with all his train.

So fell Lucifer the Son of the morn, his Friends and his Followers lamenting.

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer the Son of the morning! *Desolata Templa, rarissimus Victimarum emptor*! Some complain of people forsaking of the Gods, others of the Gods forsaking their Oracles and Temples, and becoming useless to the World: *He said I will ascend into Heaven, and*

Pliny.

Prophy.

and exalt my Throne above the Stars, but he was ſoon *brought down to Hell*.

For the Goſpel like Leaven or Fire from Heaven, ſeiſed upon all that ſtood before it; it leaven'd Cities, Iſlands, Caſtles, Councils, Camps, the Tribes and Decuries, the Palaces, Senate, Pleading-places. *Tert. Ap.* 37.

It took poſſeſſion of the Learned, and the Wiſe, the greateſt and nobleſt Wits of the Eaſtern and Weſtern Nations: It raiſed up Philoſophers to confound the Philoſophy, and noble Orators to confound the Rhetorick wherewith it was oppoſed.

Againſt *Celſus* it excited *Origen*, againſt *Porphyrie Apollinarius*, and *Methodius*; againſt *Porphyrie* and *Hierocles*, *Lactantius* and *Euſebius* (beſides what was written *ſparſim* by

Jerom, Auguſtine, Cyril, &c.) It ſet up *Chryſoſtom* againſt *Libanius*, *Prudentius* againſt *Symmachus* and the Rhetoricians.

And as it ſpread it ſelf large and high, ſo where it took poſſeſſion, it took a deep poſſeſſion, *Quantum vertice---tantum radice*: Thoſe that received it truly, received it in the love thereof, it took poſſeſſion of their hearts: It penetrated their ſpirits, and took its lodging in the inmoſt receſſes of the ſoul. The Contents of theſe Books was their moſt precious Pearl, and they hid it in their heart. The Books themſelves were their greateſt worldly treaſure, and rather than they would deliver them to be burned, they choſe to ſuffer the loſs of Honour, Liberty, Eſtate, Wives, and Children, nay even Life it ſelf. When *Dioclefian* required the Scriptures that they

they might be burned, In one Province (*Egypt*) in one Month 17000 perſons choſe rather to dye than to deliver them: In compariſon of theſe they counted not their lives dear to them; the love of them was ſtronger than Death, many waters could not quench it, neither could the flouds drown it. This was *Teſtimonium Rei*, and an advantage above all other Hiſtories, or Writings in the World. *Euſ l. 8. c. 3.*

2. Moreover they had *Teſtimonium Dei*. Indeed all that is already ſpoken is an evidence of a Divine aſſiſtance: But more particularly, God gave Teſtimony to theſe Books, by

1. Their operation upon Believers of them.

2. His co-operation with Believers of them.

1. The

1. The Gospel which they contein, was the power of God to every true Believer. That which no Institution in Philosophy, nor Initiation in the Mysteries of any of the Gods, was ever able to accompliſh, that was every where atchieved by the belief of the Gospel, in a moment. Like a charm from Heaven, it ſtilled the paſſions, and mortified the luſts of men. What a Beadroll doth *Paul* reckon up in the *Corinthians*: *But ye are waſhed* (ſaith he) *but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

Vide Orig. c. Celſ. l. 3.

1 Cor. 6. 9.

Lact. de falſ. ſap. l. 3. c. 26.

Notwithſtanding all the calumnies thrown upon Believers, and the prejudice wherewith they were loaded, the unpropitious and reluctting world were forcibly convinced that the Believers of theſe Books

Books were effectually taught to *deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts*, and *to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world*: through the cloud of ignominy wherewith they were encompaſſed, their *innocency broke forth as the light*, and their *juſt dealing as the noon day*; the piety, loyalty, juſtice, charity, magnanimity, patience, meekneſs, and purity of believers of theſe Books, convinced the unbelieving world, that *God was in them of a truth*: for they *taught as having Authority* and Power, and *not as* the writings of other *Scribes*.

2. But beſide the operation of theſe Books upon the Believers, God was pleaſed to give teſtimony to them by his co-operation with them in ſigns and wonders, and mighty deeds.

The Hiſtory of the Goſpel tells us,

us, that when Christ was even now leaving the world, he left this Legacy to believers for confirmation of the truth of the Gospel; *These signs* (said he) *shall follow them that*
Mar.16.17 *believe; In my name they shall cast out Devils; Speak in new tongues; Take up Serpents; If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; They shall lay hands on the Sick, and they shall recover.*

Now that this was made good, and that these signs (so long as there was need) were continued among Believers, we have as good assurance as we can have of any thing beyond our own memory or experience.

They have been delivered to us by a Cloud of Witnesses; by men of the greatest Wisdom and Learning in their Generations, by persons of such Integrity, that they laid

laid down their lives in teſtimony of their veracity; delivered not by hear-ſay, but upon their certain knowledge; delivered in their Diſputations with, and apologies to the Adverſaries of Chriſtianity, with a challenge to the examination of the truth, or a conviction of the falſhood of them. Inſtances are very numerous, I ſhall produce only a very few.

Juſtin the Martyr (who ſuffered *Anno* 165) affirms to *Trypho* the Jew, that theſe ſupernatural gifts were found in his time among Chriſtians. *Dial. cum Tryphone.*

Irenæus an Auditor of *Polycarp*, who was a diſciple of St. *John* (ſuffered *circa* 206) affirms upon his own knowledge, that the gift of Propheſie was then frequent in the Church, that many had the gift of tongues, *ipſi audivimus*; Others caſt *Iren. l.* 2. *c.* 56. *Euſeb.* 5. *c.* 7. *item. c.* 20.

out Devils, Others healed Diseases, Others raised the dead; and those raised persons continued many years amongst them, *pro certo.*

Tertullian in his *Apologetica adversus Gentes* affirms that *Jam de vobis Daemonas ejiciunt.*

Origen against *Celsus*, saith, that he himself had seen by invocation of God, and the name of Jesus very many that were delivered from grievous maladies, ἀπ' ἐκστάσεων (*alienatione mentis*) μανιῶν ἢ ἄλλων μυρίων. L. 3.

Not to mention others, St. *Augustine* in his Book *de Civitate Dei* (begun about 410, but many years in writing) *l.* 22, *c.* 8. gives an account of very many Miracles done at *Hippo*, *Carthage*, and other places, of no great distance, noting times, places, persons, occasions, appealing to the Countrey, delivering them under terms of the greatest

greateſt aſſurance; *Scio ego; cognoſco ego; nos interfuimus, & oculis noſtris aſpeximus*: And in his Retractations, *Ea quæ cognoſcimus neq; referre neq; enumerare poſſimus*.

Other Hiſtories and Writings, and the Authors and Believers of them can pretend no higher than to the teſtimony of men, theſe have the teſtimony of God alſo: *If we believe the teſtimony of men, the teſtimony of God is greater.* I conclude therefore, that there is greater Reaſon to believe the Hiſtory of the New Teſtament than any other Hiſtory in the world.

The ſum of all is this, The Divine Authority of the Scriptures is the great fundamental and comprehenſive Principle of Chriſtianity, which being admitted it ſtands, and being removed it preſently falls to the ground.

Againſt this therefore the great

Enemy of Religion in these later days (under pretence of Reason and Philosophy) directs his Forces, and is said to have found a success very pernicious and deplorable.

I humbly conceive that the Resolution of the belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures into the Decrees of Popes, or Determinations of Councils with those who call themselves Roman-Catholicks, into private impulses and dictates of the Spirit with the Enthusiasts, and into the Laws and Edicts of Princes and Magistrates with our new pretenders to Reason and Philosophy, is that engine whereby the Devil hath prevailed to scandalize the world, and cast it into Antiscriptural infidelity.

It is for this cause that I have conceived it requisite (after many others who have done worthily) to

to have recourſe (once more) to the Original Reaſon of things, and the common grounds whereupon mankind doth proceed in matters of this nature. *Vide Philoſ. Eſſay.*

Where (hoping that I have eſcaped the abſurdity of begging the matter in Queſtion, diſcourſing in a circle, and the inconveniences of ſome other methods) I have endeavoured to demonſtrate: That ſuppoſing the truth of the New Teſtament, both 1. The Old Teſtament, and 2. The New Teſtament are to be received as of Divine Authority.

3. And ſuppoſing matters of fact to be truly related, the Doctrinal parts are to be believed.

4. For the Hiſtorical Relation of matters of fact, that there is no ground to diſ-believe it.

That for the reception of it, it hath 1. All the advantages

whereof an History is capable.

2. Far greater advantages than any other History.

Wherefore I conclude, that *All the Scriptures* (i. e. the Canonical Books of the Old Testament and the Books of the New Testament) *were Given by inspiration of God. Quod erat demonstrandum.*

Con-

Concerning the

Sinfulneſs, Danger & Remedies

OF

INFIDELITY.

A

SERMON

Preached at *Whitehall*,

February 16. $16\frac{67}{68}$.

BY

SETH Lord Biſhop of *Sarum*.

LONDON,

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THE SINFULNESS OF INFIDELITY:

Heb. iii. 12.

Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.-- Exhort one another daily.---

I Shall not ſpend time in a diſputation concerning the Author of this Epiſtle, *viz.* whether it were *Paul*, or *Barnabas*, or *Luke*, or *Clemens*, or

or *Apollos*, &c. but shall with the Church of *England*, suppose St. *Paul* to have been the Author of it.

If the Author of it be not infallibly known, this ought not to detract from its Authority.

Most of the other Epistles have been acknowledged to be of divine Authority, because they were known to have proceeded from Apostolical writers.

This (on the contrary) hath been concluded to be an Apostolical Epistle, *propter τὸν θεῖον καὶ γνήσιον Characterem*, by reason of that divine and Apostolical Spirit, which to those who have had their Senses exercised, hath manifestly appeared in it.

If it were lawful (in this sense) to *compare spiritual things with spiritual*; I should not fear to affirm, that

that this Epiſtle hath in it ſome peculiar advantages, compared with ſome other of the Epiſtles. (Advantages, I mean, of uſefulneſs, not of Authority, ſeeing all of them iſſued from the ſame Spirit.)

The deſign of it is General, Fundamental, Comprehenſive, not Private, Circumſtantial, Occaſional: And it hath peculiarly conveyed to the Church two great treaſures. 1. A Compleat Model, or Syſteme, of Chriſtian Divinity. And 2. the way of that Analogy, and manner of ratiocination whereby the true Spirit, and meaning of the Types and Propheſies of the Old Teſtament is to be found out and applied.

It was directed to the Hebrews; That is, to thoſe of the Jewiſh Nation, who had received the Goſpel

ſpel, and made a profeſſion of Chriſtianity. And the main Scope and deſign of it, is to preſerve the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity from Apoſtacy and Infidelity.

The means uſed to this purpoſe are partly Didactical, and partly Protreptical; Demonſtrating the truths of the Goſpel, and then urging the profeſſors of thoſe truths, to be ſtedfaſt in the faith, and to beware of Infidelity.

The Method here uſed is a mixt method of Doctrine and Application; Dogmatical truths and pathetical Exhortations continually interwoven.

Chap. 1. He begins with the Great foundation of our faith. Chriſt is the Son of God, the brightneſs of his glory; better then the Angels.

Chap. 2. Wherefore *if the Word ſpoken by Angels was ſtedfaſt, how ſhall we eſcape*

cape if we neglect so great salvation?

From the Comparison of Christ with *Moses* he concludes against Hardness of heart and Infidelity. Chap. 3.

He demonstrates the Priesthood of Christ to be more Excellent then that of *Aaron*; and in the midst of his argument, he falls into an Application, or Corollary, concerning the dreadful Condition of them that fall away. 5.6.7.8.

This is his design, and method throughout the Epistle; Whatever Doctrine he is upon, this is still the drift and aim of all his Applications, namely to preserve the Professors of Christianity from Apostacy and Infidelity.

The words, which I have chosen, are a Reiteration or Reinforcement of an Application, or Corollary, arising from the Consideration

deration of the Excellency of Christ above *Moses*. *Moses was faithful in the house as a Servant; Christ as a Son, over his own house. This house are we, if we hold fast our faith.*

Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, Harden not your hearts-----

Take heed brethren, lest----

I say, the words are an Use of Exhortation, and in them are considerable,

1. The Persons to whom directed: Professors of Christianity, expressed in the Word *Brethren.*

2. Matter or Object about which it is conversant, *Unbelief*: heart unbelief.

3. Form of Exhortation by way of Caveat. βλέπετε. *take heed.*

Now every Caveat implies,

1. Evil in the thing.

2. Dan-

2. Danger of the thing.

3. That there are ways and means to prevent it. This is implyed in the Caveat, and expreſſed in words following.

My deſign, at this time, will be to enforce the Exhortation of the Text: And ſeeing that every Application is a Conſequence or Corollary ariſing from ſome Antecedent Propoſition, and the force of it is finally reſolved into the truth and evidence and concernment of that Antecedent: Therefore it will be neceſſary to draw out that Antecedent by reflecting briefly upon the Text as it lies in the Series of the Epiſtle.

I. Then, for the Perſons. They are here ſtyled Brethren, and elſewhere, *Holy Brethren*, *Partakers of the heavenly Calling*. They were ἁγιάζοντες, baptized into the profeſſion 3. 1. 6. 4.

sion of the Gospel, they had *tasted of the Word of God, and the powers of the world to come.*

II. The Matter. Unbelief, or rather Disbelief, (not Negative Infidelity, but a positive Revolting from the faith which they had professed) Generally, a Disbelief of the Word of God; Particularly, a Disbelief of the Gospel, as to the Doctrines, or Promises, or Threatnings Thereof.

III. For the Form; that which is here expressed by βλέπετε (look to it) is in the other forms Exhortation, throughout the Epistle, expressed by terms of the greatest Emphasis and earnestness imaginable, *Let us Fear lest we fall short*, 4. 1.

Labour to enter, 4. 1.

Use diligence, be not slothful, 6. 11, 12.

Press

Preſs earneſtly, draw near, hold faſt, 10 22.

Δεῖ περισσοτέρως προσέχειν μὴ ποτὲ παραῤῥυῶμεν. *Let us give more deligent heed leſt by any means we ſhould let it ſlip,* 2. 1.

So that the Sum of the Apoſtles Argumentation is this: The laſt reſolution of all the Obligation of men, is into reaſons of Duty and of Intereſt.

If there be Wickedneſs in Infidelity, it is matter of Duty; if there be Danger in it, and Danger of it, it is matter of Intereſt and Concernment to Beware of it.

This Heart of Unbelief is *an Evil heart* (καρδία πονηρὰ) there is Wickedneſs in it. It grieves the Spirit of God; It provoked him ſo, that he ſware in his wrath, that he would take Vengeance for it: there is Danger in it. Yet it was a thing Ordinary and common

amongst the Fathers of these Hebrews, it was *neque Novum, neque Rarum*, there is Danger of it.

"It is the Duty and Concern-
"ment of every one Professing
"Christianity, to take heed lest
"there be in them an heart of Un-
"belief; and to use all means to
"prevent it. This is the Antece-
dent.

Wherefore take heed brethren, &c.. which is the Exhortation by way of Caveat; —— *Exhort one another dayly*, &c. which is the way to prevent it.

So then for the enforcement of the exhortation upon the whole matter, I am to speak

I. *Of the Evil of Infidelity.*

II. *Of the Danger of falling into it.*

III. *Of the means of preventing it.*

And then to conclude with

IV. *The Exhortation of the Text.*

In

In ſpeaking of the Evil of Infidelity, I ſhall not diſcourſe at large, but confine my ſelf to an enquiry into two pretences, (Which having been broached in the late times of Infidelity towards the King, are ſaid to have operated very far towards a general Apoſtacy from the faith, and the production of Infidelity towards God) both which appealing to the tenor of the Scriptures, muſt be examined by them.

The firſt is of a famous Author, and it is this, That the Scriptures do not make Infidelity to be a Sin, at the time of the delivery of the Scriptures.

The ſecond is of a Writer more obſcure, but in it ſelf, ſo agreeable to the diſpoſition of the preſent generation, that it hath poſſeſſed the minds of many; it is this; that C. W.

Although Infidelity (according to the Scriptures) in the times of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, were ſinful, and inexcuſable; yet in our times, it is excuſable. Theſe are the pretences to be examined.

The Subſtance of the Goſpel, as it immediately relates to Chriſtian duty, is ſummarily reduced to the Doctrines and Injunctions of our Lord Chriſt, and his Apoſtles.

The Author of Leviathan (cap. 42. pag 286.) tells us in plain terms, that "*We do not read any* "*where (in the Scriptures) that they* "*which received not the Doctrine of* "*Chriſt, did therein Sin.*

"And again, that the Injunctions "of Chriſt, and his Apoſtles, men "might refuſe without ſin.

Now concerning this aſſertion, I cannot chuſe but ſay, that had I not

not been acquainted with the works of that Author, (especially those relating to religion) I should exceedingly wonder at it, because it supposes men never to look into their Bibles, which is the thing it would perswade.

In the 21. of *Matth.* Our Saviour askes the Jews this question, *Did ye never read in the Scriptures* such a thing? a question which I must repeat to the Assertors of this doctrine. Did they never read in the Scriptures the Sinfulness, the Danger, the Heinousness of Infidelity? Surely he that runs may read it. Mat. 21. 42.

Our Saviour Christ before his death, did oftentimes vehemently rebuke his Disciples, for Infidelity, *O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I endure you?* (*Quousque tandem abutemini patientiâ nostrâ*:) And Luk. 9. 41.

after his Resurrection, he calls them
Ch. 24. 25. *fools and slow of heart*, for unbelieving: Did they never read these Increpations?

2. The Author of this Epistle, and the rest of the Apostles, do every where vehemently and earnestly dehort from Unbelief. Did they never read these Dehortations?

3. In the 8 of *John*, Christ tells the
Joh. 8. 24. Jews, that if they *believe not*, they
3. 36. *shall dye in their Sins*. That *the wrath of God abideth on them*, that *he that believeth not, is damned already*. Did they never read these Denunciations?

Yes! these last, it seems, this Author had read, and as his manner is, thinking he could accomodate an answer to these, he hath pronounced securely of all the rest: To these he saith that they import only

only a non-remiſſion of the ſins committed againſt the Laws of their Countrey; (that they ſhould dye in them;) but that they do not evince any ſinfulneſs to be in Infidelity; Wherefore I muſt crave licence to proceed.

The Apoſtle in the 21 of the Revelations, gives a Catalogue of ſuch ſinners as are of the higheſt rank, Such as are moſt abominable in the eyes of God, Such as are to have their *portion in that lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone*, and he puts *Unbelievers* in the head of this Regiment; *The fearful, and Unbelievers, and Abominable, and Murtherers, and Whoremongers, and Sorcerers, and Lyars ſhall have their portion in that lake.* 4. Rev. 21. 8.

But it may be, perhaps, that the Scripture doth not in plain and expreſs terms, affirm Infidelity to be Sinful! *Obj.* 1.

Resp. 1. The Text tells us plainly and expressly, that an heart of unbelief is κακὴ πονηρά (not κακὴ but πονηρὰ, not incommodious but wicked.)

Obj. 2. But Philosophers and Mathematicians (pretending strictness and demonstration in discourse) regard not general words; but have recourse to the Definitions of things, and from thence proceed to affirm or deny the Attribution which is under question.

Resp. 2. Let us therefore have recourse to the definition of Sin.

Those who have spoken most accurately concerning the nature of Sin, they have resolved, that the formal notion of it, consists in a departure from God. It is *Aversio à Deo, & Conversio ad creaturam.*

Jer. 2. 12. In the second of *Jeremy*, and the twelfth,

twelfth, we find the Prophet as it were in *furore sacro* (in a prophetick rage) breaking forth into this Exclamation, *Be astonished, O ye heavens, be ye horribly afraid, be very desolate, saith the Lord!* What ailes the Prophet to cry so loud? to make the heavens resound his Exclamation? *My people* (saith he) *have committed two Great evils, they have Forsaken me*, that's the first. An heart of unbelief, is *an evil heart, in departing from the living God.*

It is true that the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, doth not usually descend to Logical accuracy, to the *quatenus*, or Causality, to the observation of the rules of κατὰ παντὸς, καθ' αὑτὸ, καθόλου πρῶτον.

And this makes it oft-times, harder to deal with men of perverse minds, then many do imagine.

But

But the more rare this is, the more you will take notice of the Providence, when you ſhall conſider, how accurately, and how fully, the Scripture hath determined that which is in Queſtion.

Joh. 16.8. In the 16. of *John*, v. 8. our Saviour tells them, that *the Spirit ſhall rebuke the world of Sin, of righteouſneſs, of judgment: Of Sin,* 3.18. 19. *Becauſe they believe not on him.* Joh. 3. 18. he that *believeth not is Condemned, becauſe he believeth not.* Αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ κρίσις, the rejection of the Goſpel is ſaid to be the very Condemnation, So expreſly is the τὸ διότι delivered to us, (by Cauſal and Identical propoſitions) in the Scripture; Who is it now, that can perſwade us, that the Scriptures do not affirm any Sinfulneſs to be in Infidelity?

Yes verily! the Scriptures not only

only teach us, that unbelief is a sin, but they teach us likewise

6. The Heinousness and Aggravation, the Sinfulness and Punishment of this Sin.

It was this that brought all other sin into the World, and every Premeditated sin arises from it. It hardens the heart, and sears the Conscience, and makes it bid defiance to the Lord of Glory.

Concerning *David* we read in the *Psalms*, that once he *said in his haste that all men are lyars*, did he revoke it when he was at leisure? No, the more he thought of it, the higher he proceeds, and becomes the more assured in this charge; *Surely* (saith he) *Men of low degree are Vanity, and men of high degree are* (not lyars but) *a Lie.* Yet if one gives the lie to one of these lyars, it is the utmost Psal. 62. 9.

pro-

provocation; it is the ſtated word
Neh.23.19 of defiance, concluded fit to juſtifie the Duel or the Stab. On the other ſide, God glories in this,
Numb.23. that *he is not a man that he ſhould lye,*
19. 1 Sam. 15. 29. that *the ſtrength of Iſrael will not lye,* yet infidelity gives him the lye. *He that believeth not God makes him a Lyar.* (1 John 5. 10.)

7. I deſire to know what is that κεφάλαιον, whereby the Heinouſneſs of any ſin is to be eſtimated.

Is it the denunciation of Fu-
2 Thes. 1. 7. ture Vengeance? *The Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from heaven with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon Unbelievers, and they ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction, from the preſence of the Lord, and from the preſence of his power.*

Is it Old or New, Paſt or Preſent Inſtances of Vengeance? Were not

not the body of this people *newly cut off for unbelief*? And of ancient days, whose were *the Carcasses that fell in the wilderness*; and to whom did *God swear in his wrath, that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not*? Rom. 11. 20 Heb. 3.

Consider but the story, from whence the Exhortation of the Text arises. How God was provoked through unbelief. The text tells us, that he *was Moved*, he *was Tempted*, he *was Grieved*, he *was Provoked*, till *he sware in his wrath*——

The words are taken out of the 95 Psalm, to which the 78. is parallel. *They were* (saith the Psalmist) *a stubborn and rebellious Generation; They tempted God, and spoke against him, Therefore the Lord heard this and was wroth: So a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger against Israel*; Psalm. 95.

Israel; Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his Salvation —

When God heard this, he was wroth, and greatly abhorred Israel, he gave way to his Indignation, wrath, anger, displeasure and Jealousy.

I conceive now the first Question to be stated, viz. Whether (according to the tenor of the Scripture) Infidelity were sinful and dangerous, in the time of the delivery of the Scriptures: I proceed to the second Question, *viz.* (However it was in ancient times)

2. Whether Infidelity, be not in such times as ours Excusable?

My meaning is this: Whether (speaking according to the Scriptural grounds, and reason) Now that Miracles, extraordinary gifts and Prophesies are ceased, Infidelity be not become Excusable (however

ever it might be Sinful and inexcuſable during the time when Propheſies and Miracles were in uſe?)

The firſt verſe of this Epiſtle (to the Hebrews) tells us what powerful and noble motives to believe, God had afforded to the Fathers.

God himſelf was pleaſed to ſpeak to them, πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως, at ſundry times, and in divers manners.

In the times of the Patriarchs, Judges, Kings, and Prophets, by the ways of Viſions, Dreams, Voices, Similitudes, Urim, and by divers miracles and wonders.

So likewiſe, for thoſe that are here exhorted; About the time of the Writing of this Epiſtle, God had ſpoken to them by his Son (the brightneſs of his Glory, the image of his perſon) And by the Apoſtles

Apoſtles, to whom alſo he bare Witneſs, by mighty ſigns and wonders, by divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt.

Now that ſuch men as theſe, who had ſo great advantages to bring them to believe, ſhould be ſeverely puniſhed for Infidelity, I am perſwaded there is hardly any man but thinks it very juſt and reaſonable.

That ſuch as had ſeen the wonders of God, in *Egypt* and the Wilderneſs, ſo manifeſtly miraculous, ſo often repeated, and yet for all this would not believe, that their Carcaſſes ſhould fall in the Wilderneſs.

That *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, who had known the miracles which had been done by the Apoſtles, ſhould think to Couſen the Apoſtles: it deſerved the Judgment

Judgment that befel them.

As for our ſelves had we lived in times of Miracles or Propheſies, we doubt not but we ſhould have believed. Or, as *Philip* ſaid, ſhew us the father, and it ſufficeth. Could we but once ſee a miracle, or talk with one returning from the dead; it ſhould ſuffice, we would believe.

But ſeeing it is now many hundreds of years, ſince theſe things are ceaſed, and we have nothing left us, *Præter miraculorum famam*; If we ſhall not believe the Goſpel; by ſome it is openly pretended, and by many it is ſecretly imagined, that, in this caſe we may be Excuſed.

I could wiſh that the time would ſerve, clearly to rid away this phantaſm; In order to it, I ſhall briefly doe three things.

1. 1. Shew that this Phantastical imagination is no new invention, but that it hath of old, been the conceit of abominable Hypocrites.

2. 2*ly*. I shall inquire a little into the grounds of this Conceit, and shew the mistake of those suppositions, into which it is resolved.

3. 3*ly*. I shall shew, that our Saviour (Knowing the thoughts of men) hath taken particular care to prevent this Imagination; and hath clearly decided the matter in Question.

1. Though the present age be fruitful in inventions tending this way, yet this hath been Anticipated by the Wits of former times

Luc. 11. 47. In the 11 of *Luke* 47. We find the Scribes and Pharises, *building the Sepulchres of the Prophets, whom their*

their fathers had killed.

If we would know, what they pretended, in ſo doing, we ſhall find it in the parallel place of *Matthew. They ſaid, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them, in the blood of the Prophets.* Matth. 23. 30.

That theſe men, did not believe the Prophets, it is manifeſt; Chriſt tells them, *if they had believed the Prophets, they would have believed him; for they wrote of him.*

But that they would have believed the Prophets, (and not have murthered them) had they lived in their times, this they pretended: and it is very probable they had that opinion.

Yes Verily! had they lived in the days of Miracles and Propheſies, they would have believed, the very conceit which is now Pretended!

But the Truth is, these men were abominable Hypocrites, and the cause of their Unbelief, was not the want of miracles and Prophesies, but Carnal prejudice, and interest, and the Vile affections of their hearts. Did not Christ work miracles? Was not he that Prophet which was to come? Yet they took him, and with wicked hands they slew him, and brought upon themselves the bloud of all the Prophets.

But 2*ly*. If we shall examine the bottom of this fancy, and resolve it into its Principles, we shall find that it supposes these things.

1. That the want of the sight of miracles, is sufficient to Justifie unbelief.

2. That to live in the very age of miracles, is apter to create belief,

lief, then to be born and educated, in a believing nation, after the world hath been convinced by the miracles of former times (which is our Case.)

3. That the bare sight of miracles, is of it self alone, sufficient to create belief, in every person that should see them.

Of which suppositions, the first is contrary to common Reason, and the two later are contrary to Scriptural Reason, and to the experience of the world

1. If the want of the sight of miracles were enough to justifie Infidelity, then for every *Dogma* to be believed, Every Individual person, were to expect the sight of miracles; which if it should happen, the wonder should cease, and miracles become no miracles, by the frequency of the performances of

them, and ſo they would be inept to create belief.

Every work of nature, is in it ſelf a miracle; Who would not think it eaſier to recover a man, (who had all his parts and humours already formed,) from the dead, then from that liquid principle whereof *Job* ſpeakes, to raiſe
Job.10.10. up *fleſh and skin, bones and ſinews*: to advance an underſtanding creature, capable of adoring or blaſpheming the maker of him? Yet that is a miracle, and this is none, only through the rarity of one, and frequency of the other.

Again, if every one were to ſee
Jo.20.29. miracles, the merit of faith would be taken away. "*Jeſus ſaid unto* "*Thomas, becauſe thou haſt ſeen--* "*thou haſt believed, Bleſſed are they* "*that have not ſeen, yet they have believed.* This for the firſt ſuppoſition.

2. The

2. The ſecond is this, that to live in the very age of miracles, is apter to create a belief, then to live in a believing nation a good time after the times of Miracles.

But, contrary to this, we have inſtances both in Jews and Gentiles. After near 4000 years, how pertinaciouſly do the Jews adhere to *Moſes*, againſt whom their fathers Murmured, and rebelled, notwithſtanding the ſight of all his miracles; and when he had wrought that great miracle upon *Corah* and for his rebellion, the next day they rebelled again.

And we find now all the whole world, (eſpecially the wiſer part) Converted to Chriſtianity, whereas the Apoſtles complain of the paucity of profeſſors, and the Infidelity of the Jews, in the Age of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, was ſo

great and resolute that it hath a fatal operation upon that nation unto this day.

I am sensible, that in the Comparison of later ages with the days of miracles, I may be thought δουλεύειν ὑποθέσει, and to advance a paradox, where that I may not lean on my own understanding, I beseech you to consider our Saviours decision of the Question which we have in hand.

I suppose, I may take it for granted, that the condition of the Jews in our Saviours time, was in respect of *Moses*, the same (as to the matter in Question) with our Condition in respect of Christ.

The tradition of the law, was accompanyed with mighty Signs and wonders. And so likewise the tradition of the Gospel.

In

In the times succeeding *Moses*, God for a Season continued the sensible manifestation of his presence, by miracles. So he did likewise in the times succeeding Christ.

But before the time of our Saviour both miracles and Prophesies had a long time ceased. *We see not our Tokens* (saith the Psalmist) *there is not one Prophet left*; as it is with us at this day. Psal. 74. 9.

Onely, they had the books of *Moses* and the prophets, Just so Conveighed and propounded to them, as our scriptures have been to us.

So that, if the Question be proposed concerning those Jews; whether the present miracles of Christ, or the complexion of Motives which they had, to induce them to believe the writings of *Moses*, were

were apter to create belief, It is the same with our Question, Whether the living in the time of Miracles, or our Motives; are more powerful to believing. To determine which Question; we may observe; That the Apostles after the sight of all our Saviours miracles, continued in unbelief, till he had opened unto them the Scriptures, of *Moses* and the Prophets. That after many miracles, he refers the Jews to the searching of the Scriptures; (bringing them *à notiori ad ignotius.*) And in the 5 of *John* and the 47. he decides this Question by another "If ye "do not believe the writings of "*Moses* how shall ye believe my "Words?

John 5.47.

Thus much concerning the second supposition.

3. The third is this, that the sight

ſight of miracles, is of it ſelf alone, ſufficient to bring every perſon to believing.

We ought indeed to own it, to the eternal glory of our bleſſed Redeemer, that the Faith of Chriſtians is founded upon his Miracles as well as on his Doctrine, and example. And he himſelf tells the Jews, that *if he had not done* miracles *they ſhould not have had ſin* (i. e. the ſin of Infidelity.) But Joh. 15. 24. Now to dream of miracles, and hanker after them; or to think to Excuſe our Infidelity, for want of the ſight of them, (as if that alone would certainly make believers of us all,) it argues that we have been ſloathful readers of the Scriptures.

It hapned to our Saviours miracles as it did to his Preaching; according to his parable of the ſower.

sower. Some of them lighted upon hearts that were honest and good, and brought forth the fruit of believing. Others fell by the way side, or upon stony places, or among the Thorns.

The prepossession of their minds, by an expectation of a temporal Messiah, in the Rulers; The fear of persecution by them, in the People; The Cares of the World, and deceitfulness of riches; The pleasures and and lusts, to which the Austerities of the Gospel rules, were opposite; and many other prejudices, deeply rooted in the hearts of a perverse and froward Generation, prevailed against the sight of miracles; and none were more pervers and resolute unbelievers, then some of those, who had the Advantage of this great argument for believing.

If

If the ſight of Miracles alone, were ſufficient to produce belief, in all kinds of Spectators, certainly the Scribes and Phariſees, (who by their learning were able to Judge of a miracle,) the Countrymen and Kinſmen of Chriſt (with whom he was moſt Converſant,) ſhould have been moſt Eminent in believing.

But behold the inchantment of prejudice and Carnal Intereſt! In the 5. of *Luke* 21. The Phariſees and Doctors ſaw the miracles of Chriſt, and yet they concluded him a Blaſphemer. And when he had healed him that was born blind; they (hypocritically) bad the man *give Glory to God*, and ſaid *they knew* that *Jeſus was a ſinner.* Luk. 5. 21.

They turn'd his miracles into wantonneſs, *fain'd themſelves Juſt* Joh. 9. 24.

men

men that they might tempt him, i. e. put a trick upon him: *demanding a ſign*
Luc. 20. 20. for a ſight, only to ſatisfy their wanton Curioſity.

As for his Countrey men, this Prophet *had no honour there, he did*
Matth. 13. 58 *not many miracles, among them becauſe of their unbelief. His friends*
Mar. 3. 21. *ſaid, he was beſide himſelf, and went*
John 7. 5. *to lay hold on him.*

As for the People, In the ſixth
Joh. 6. 10. of John we find, that Chriſt fed five thouſand men with five loaves and two ſmall fiſhes, *ſo that they ſaid, this is of a truth that Prophet.* But the very next day (ver. 22.) the Very *men that had eaten of the loaves* (26) *Said unto him, what ſign ſheweſt thou that we may believe? what doſt thou work?* (30) as if a miracle had not been a Sign!

Mat. 5. 17. He wrought a miracle among the

the *Gadarens*, and *they beſought him to be gone.* Others were *offended at him, and caſt him out of their City.* The iſſue of all his miracles, was this; *Some ſaid he was a good man, Others Nay! but he deceiveth the people.* And *many ſaid he had a Devil and was mad.* Joh. 7. 12. Joh. 10. 20.

Nay when he hung upon the croſs they acknowledge his miracles, and jeered him with them; *He ſaved others, himſelf he cannot ſave; let him do one more miracle, let him come down from the Croſs. and we will believe him*: So Vain is the pretence of thoſe, who think to excuſe their Infidelity, becauſe they cannot ſee a miracle! So falſe are the Grounds of that opinion. Matth. 27. 42.

3. Briefly, to bring this Argument to an iſſue. 3.

If it were granted to theſe perſons,

ſons, to ſee a miracle, what kind of miracle would they chuſe, to convince their underſtandings, and ſettle them in religion? We are here I confeſs *in loco conjecturali*; and no man can tell what miracle another man would chuſe, but I am perſwaded, that which moſt men would agree upon, as moſt conducing to that purpoſe whereof we are ſpeaking, would be this; that to aſſure them of the Immortality of the Soul and of the rewards and puniſhments of the world to come, and to ſatisfie their Curioſity in ſome other doubts and ſcruples; They might once be allowed to ſee and converſe with ſome one, that might riſe from the dead, who might reſolve their Queſtions, concerning the condition of thoſe that are in *Hades*.

3. I ſay then, that our Saviour who

who knew, what was in man, and needed not that any one ſhould tell him; foreſeeing this Phantaſtical conceit, hath ſhewed the folly of it, and preoccupated this vain reſort. In the 16 of *Luke* 27. *Dives* makes it his requeſt to *Abraham*; *that he would ſend Lazarus from the dead; to teſtify to his brethren*, thoſe things which theſe men dream of. *Abraham* refers them to the Scriptures, which were in the ſame manner recommended to them as our Scriptures are to us. *They have Moſes and the Prophets*, &c. *let them hear them.* Luc. 16. 27.

He ſaith unto him, Nay father Abraham, but if one went to them from the dead, they would believe.

And he (Abraham) *ſaid If they hear not Moſes and the Prophets, neither will they be perſwaded though one roſe from the dead.*

Joh. 11. This I take to be a clear and a full determination of the matter in Question; And if any one should imagine, that this determination was but Conjectural, Our Saviour afterwards tries the Experiment, and raises another *Lazarus* from the dead.

What was the effect of this mans coming from the dead, did it Convert the High Priest or the Scribes, the rulers or the people; nay, but *from* 53. *that very day they took counsel together how they might put Jesus to death. And the Chief Priests consulted, how they might put Lazarus to death also.*

Upon these Considerations we may infallibly Conclude, that Infidelity in Such times as ours, is no more excusable, then it was in the days of Christ or his Apostles; the times of miracles and prophesies.

So much of the first Supposition, in the Caveat of the Text, the

Sinfulness

Sinfulneſs of Infidelity in General, at all times, And the Inexcuſableneſs in our times, which makes it our Duty to take heed of it.

I paſs to the ſecond ſuppoſition, II. concerning the Danger of falling into it, which makes it our concernment and Intereſt to beware of it. For if this be clear, the Exhortation will be powerful, *take heed brethren, &c.*

Now the Danger of falling into infidelity is in it ſelf ſo conſpicuous, and made ſo ſenſible by every day's experience, that I wiſh the proof of it were difficult, ſo as to Juſtify a ſtudious and laborious demonſtration of it.

At once to ſhorten my diſcourſe, and to remove the ſuſpicion of any Satyrical reflexion upon thoſe that hear me; I ſhall ſhew, that the Greateſt Advantages, have not

preserved the best of men, from sometimes falling into Infidelity. *Take heed therefore, brethren.*

The greatest Helps and Advantages against unbelief, I conceive to be these ensuing.

1. Evidences of Gods presence. 2. Or these lighting on a good understanding. 3. At least upon the Ablest of men. 4. Such as have held Communion with God. 5. Or have been eminent for the habit and exercise of faith. 6. Or these with warnings to prevent the Danger of falling. 7. And those reiterated. Yet all these, have not preserved good men from sometimes falling. A word of each.

1. First then, to begin with the persons in the Context, What greater Evidences of the Presence of God can be Imagined, then they enjoyed! In *Egypt*, in their passage

over

over the red Sea; in the Wilderneſs, "*my preſence*, ſaith God, *ſhall go along with you*, They were conducted by a Pillar of a Cloud, *&c.* they were ſupported, and Corrected by Viſible and palpable inſtances of Gods power and preſence: Yet they tempted and grieved the Spirit of God, by their Infidelity, for *they believed not for all his Wonderous Works.*

2. But theſe Jews were a dull and ſtupid people. If God ſhould once manifeſt himſelf, to a wiſe and underſtanding perſon (ſuch as we take our ſelves to be) We may think it impoſſible to fall into unbelief.

I ſuppoſe it will be no diſparagement to theſe Objectors, to ſay, that *Solomon* might be as Wiſe and Knowing, as Wary and Philoſophical as they. And as for the ma-

nifestation of Gods presence, the Scripture tells us Expresly, that
1 Kin. 3. 5. *God appeared to him at Gibeon*: Where he made a promise to him which he performed.

Yet *Solomon* fell into the grossest Infidelity; to think there were Gods and Goddesses, To *worship*
2 Kin. 11. 5. *Ashtaroth, the Goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom the Abomination of the Ammonites.*

3. But it may be yet Objected, that *Solomon* did this in the Dotage of his years, and his Dotage upon his Idolatrous wives, which turned away his heart, but that it could not have proceeded from him before his understanding was impaired

Behold then a greater then *Solomon*! even *Adam* in his full strength, when he was newly made after the similitude of God, a little lower

lower then the Angels. God ſeveral times appeared to him in the Garden; Yet he fell through unbelief, and drew all his poſterity into his ruine.

4. But *Adam*, though he had perfection of Nature, yet he wanted Grace, whereby he might have held communion with God; which having been once enjoyed, would for ever have kept him from infidelity, or deliberate ſin, which always proceeds from it.

Conſider then the caſe of *David*, of whom it is ſaid, that *the Spirit of the Lord God came upon him*; That *God* himſelf *made a Covenant with him, and Sware unto him by his holineſs, that he would not fail him.* 1 Sam. 16. 13. Pſal. 89. 4.

And as for *David*, who was like unto him, for Devotion and Zeal, for ſpiritual Communion and in-

tercourse with God? He was *the sweet singer of Israel*; and how often do we find his Spirit inebriated and transported in the Celebration of his divine and ravishing enjoyments?

Yet we find him falling from all this height; and great and terrible was his fall; he went *mourning for it all his days*, and *bowed down his head continually*.

5. But perhaps it may be thought, that though *David* was an Excellent man, yet seeing his Eminency lay not in the gift of Faith, but in Zeal, or in some other Grace, the danger may not yet be so very considerable.

Behold then even *Abraham*, the Darling of the almighty, who *conversed with God as a man converseth with his Friend*: to whom God communicated his presence in

Dreams

Dreams, in Visions, in Apparitions, πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως.

He was imbued with the Habit of Faith; he exerted it in the noblest exercise; he manifested it in the heroical degree; so that he became *the Father of the Faithful.*

Yet once we find him offending (tripping) at this stone of stumbling; Equivocating through unbelief.

6. But all these instances were during the Ancient Dispensation, when the Communication of the presence of God was more Obscure; before the fulness of time was come, when *the Word was made flesh* and *dwelt amongst men, and they saw his glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of God.*

Besides, we do not find that they were particularly and distinctly warned of their danger, which

which may leſſen the Wonder of the fall.

Conſider then the Caſe of *Peter*, the firſt of the Apoſtles. He had been cloſely converſant with Chriſt during all the time of his Miniſtry; Was a witneſs of his miracles, ſaw his Transfiguration, heard *the Voyce which came to him from the Excellent glory, ſaying this is my beloved Son——*

2 Pet. 1. 19.

As for his faith; he it was, that made that confeſſion, upon which the Chriſtian Church is founded. And Chriſt had *prayed for him that his faith ſhould not fail.*

He was a Valiant man; and he undertook that though he died, he would neither forſake nor deny his Maſter.

When Chriſt forewarns him plainly and punctually, that his faith would fail him, that very night, before

fore a certain hour; So that it was impoſſible he ſhould be ſurpriſed.

You know his Undertakings, and of his Failings it is unneceſſary to ſpeak.

7. I know nothing now that can be alledged, againſt the general propenſity of all men to Unbelief, but this; that *Peter* was now ſingle and alone, that he failed only this time; when he was invironed with Bills and Staves, and in Danger of his Life.

Wherefore let us call to mind the Caſe of all the Apoſtles, in the great Foundation of our Faith, the Article of Chriſts Reſurrection; when theſe temptations were away.

The reſurrection of the dead was in thoſe times ſo commonly believed, that it was conceived of Chriſt, that he was *one of the Old Pro-*

Prophets risen from the Dead, and *Herod said, he was John the Baptist risen from the dead.*

Of the resurrection, the Apostles had seen Experiments, in *Lazarus*, and in the bodies of the Saints which arose.

Concerning Christs resurrection, how plainly and often were they forewarned? After he was risen, how often were they told of it? Yet how grossely and often did they fail?

Mar. 8. 31. In they 8 of *Mark* 31 Christ tells his Disciples, that he *should be killed, and the third day he would rise*
32. *again*: He *spake this saying Openly*; So Openly that the Jews took no-
Mat. 27. 63. of it (*this deceiver said that the third day he would rise again*) moreover he promised them plainly that after
Mar. 16. 11. 33. he was risen, he *would go before them into Galilee*; and appointed them a certain

certain Mountain where they ſhould ſee him.

Yet after he was riſen, *Mary Magdalen* told them that he had appeared to her. But they believed not *Mary Magdalen*. *Joanna*, and *Mary* the Mother of *James*, told them the ſame, But *their Speech ſeemed to them as Idle tales.* Luc. 24. 11.

The two Diſciples told the reſt, that he had appeared to them going to *Emmaus*, but *they believed them not.*

He appeared in the midſt of ten of them at once, ſhewed them his hands and his ſide, But *they believed not for joy.*

Chriſt when he appeared to the Women, bade them tell the Diſciples and *Peter*, that according to his promiſe, they ſhould ſee him in *Galilee.* Luc. 24. 41. Mat. 28. 7.

And the eleven Diſciples went into Galilee, to a mountain which Jeſus had

had appointed them, And when they saw him, they Worshipped; But some doubted.

Mat. 16. 14. So that Christ, almost in his last words, *Upbraided them with their Unbelief — because they believed not them who had seen him, after he was risen.*

So prone are even the best of men, after their highest attainments, under the best advantages, to fall sometime into Infidelity! So great is the danger of Unbelief!

It is true indeed, that all these, Mic. 7. 8. might say with the Prophet, *Rejoyce not against me O mine enemy, for though I fall, I shall arise again.* Yet *all these things are written for our learning, that he that thinketh he stan-* 1 Cor. 10. *deth, may take heed lest he fall.* If 11, 12. *these things have been done to the green tree, what may be done to the dry?*

dry? If the worthies and the mighty have fallen (how have the mighty fallen?) ought not the feeble to take care? Yes certainly they ought.

III. And to use all means to prevent their falling, which is the third thing, supposed in the Caveat, and expressed in the words following *Take heed brethren least*, &c. *Exhort one another daily* ——

Now the Means to prevent the falling into Infidelity are the Arguments evincing the truth of the Gospel, which are very numerous. Whereof I cannot now speak particularly.

The Apostle in this Epistle makes use of two sorts viz.

From { 1. Scriptures of the Old Testament. 2. Common Reason, whereof I shall speak a little.

The

The Argument from Reason is delivered in the 2. Chap. v. 3. 4.

The Gospel was delivered by the Lord, and confirmed (to us) by them that heard him.

God also bearing them Witness with Signs and wonders, and divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

God bare witness to Christ the Author of the Gospel: And to the Apostles, the Promulgers of the Gospel. Wherefore it is to be believed.

The Antecedent of this Enthymem is the sum of what I shall deliver.

Jo. 8. 13. When the Pharisees said unto Christ, *thy Record is not true*, because *thou beareſt record of thy self. I am one* (saith Christ) *that bear record of my self, and the Father that sent me, beareth witness of me.*

More

Moreover he tells the Diſciples that the *Comforter ſhould teſtify of him.* And *ye alſo ſhall bear witneſs, becauſe ye have been with me from the beginning.* 18. 15. 26. 27.

So that beſide the Witneſs of the Apoſtles, the Goſpel had the Atteſtation of all the perſons of the Trinity: *viz.*

of the { 1. Father, 2. Son, 3. Holy Ghoſt.

1. God the Father bore witneſs to his Son, and that he did, by 1. Viſible Signs, and 2. Audible Voices, 3. by Miſſion of Angels, 4. by Co-operating in his Miracles, *&c.*

1. At his Nativity a new Star appeared. At his Baptiſm they ſaw the heaven opened, and the Spi-

rit sent from the Father in the visible shape of a Dove, and lighting upon him. Before his Passion, he was transfigured in their sight. And At it the Sun was eclipsed when the Moon was full, the Veil, the Rocks, rent, so that the Centurion said, *Surely this man was the Son of God*; Bodies of Saints were seen of many: All these were visible signs.

2. As for the בת קול (*the Daughter of the Voice*) In his Baptism *Lo! a voyce from heaven, Saying, This is my beloved Son*—— At his Transfiguration a *Voyce came out of a cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son—— hear him.* A little before his death, as he was Praying, *Father, glorifie thy Name, There came a voyce from heaven, Saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.*

Mar. 3. 17. 17. 5.

Jo. 12. 28.

3. For

3. For miſſion of Angels by the Father, We find them ſtill ready upon all occaſions from before his Coming down, to the time of his Aſcenſion into Heaven.

Before his Conception, the Angel *Gabriel* appeared to *Zachary* and to *Mary*, before his Nativity to *Joſeph*, *ſaying*, *fear not Joſeph*. At the time of his Nativity a whole Chorus appeared to the Shepherds. In his Infancy an Angel appeared twice to *Joſeph*, admoniſhing him of his going to *Egypt* and his return from thence. Luc. 1. 18. 19. Mar. 1. 20. Luc. 2. 9, 31. Mar. 2. 13. 1. 9, 20.

In his Adult age they miniſtred to him in his hunger; Before his death, *they ſtrengthned him* in his Agony; After it, they *rolled away the ſtone* from his Sepulcher; They declared his Reſurrection; and in his Aſcenſion, they ſtood by, and foretold his coming again to Judg- 4. 11. Luc. 22. 43. Mar. 28. 2. Mar. 16. 6. Jo. 20. 12. Act. 1, 16.

ment. *Ye men of Galilee why ſtand ye gazing? This ſame Jeſus*—

4. The Father co-operated with him, according to that of our Saviour, *The father worketh hitherto and I work* —— &c.

Theſe are ſome of the Atteſtations of the Father.

2. Chriſt bore witneſs of himſelf. And this he did, by proving himſelf to be the Meſſiah; *viz.* by fulfilling all the propheſies relating to the Perſon or Offices; the Life, and the Death of the Meſſiah.

His Generation was ſuch as cannot be declared, he was born at *Bethlehem*, of the Tribe of *Judah*, of the Family of *David*, about 490 years after the return from Captivity. When the Scepter was juſt now departed from *Juda*.

He performed not only the Subſtance

ſtance of the Propheſies, but all the Circumſtances foretold, concerning the Life and Death of the Meſſiah.

1. He was to be a Prophet, and ſo he was. *The Spirit of the Lord anointed* him *to preach*, and *he ſpake as never man ſpake.* He foretold many things to come, they all bare him witneſs.

2. He was to be a King, and ſo he was. His Name was Wonderful; his Power was ſhewen throughout the univerſal Syſtem of the World; the Angels good and evil, the Heavens, Elements, Plants, Fiſhes, Brutes, Health and Sickneſs, Life and Death, were all *obedient unto his Word.*

3 He was to be a Prieſt, and ſo he was. He made an Atonement by his Obedience, and by his ſufferings to the leaſt punctilio (to the

taking of a little Vinegar) and when all things were fulfilled, *He*
Joh. 19 30. *cryed with a loud voice τετέλεσται, it is finiſhed, and he bowed his head and gave up the Ghoſt.*

Moreover, for the Juſtification of his Goſpel (and that he might leave no place for Infidelity;) he roſe again from the dead, appeared to many, convinced them by all their Senſes; They ſaw him, They heard him, They felt his hands and his ſide, They Eat and Drank with him; They *Converſed with him* 40 *dayes*; *He was ſeen by more then* 500 *at once*; and (laſtly) *in the ſight* of Many of them, he Aſcended Viſibly into Heaven.

Theſe were ſome of the Teſtimonies, which our Lord Chriſt bare to himſelf.

3, The time would fail me, if I ſhould ſpeak of all the Teſtimonies given

given by the Holy Spirit.

In his Conception, to *Mary*, fulfilling the Promiſe of *Gabriel*.

Before his Nativity, to *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, in his Infancy to *Simeon* and *Hanna*, in his Baptiſm to *John*. *I knew him not*, ſaith *John*, *but he that ſent me to baptize*, *ſaid unto me*, *upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending and reſting on him*, *that is he*: *and I ſaw the Spirit deſcending*: Throughout his whole Miniſtry, till his Death, the Spirit gave witneſs to him. Joh. 1. 31.

Moreover, in his Reſurrection *he was declared the Son of God*, *with power by the Holy Ghoſt*. After his Aſcenſion, the Holy Ghoſt fulfilled all his undertakings, in that Grand Manifeſtation at Pentecoſt, at the time and place which Chriſt had undertaken for; A manifeſtation made to all the Senſes, and to Rom. 1. 4.

men of every nation under heaven, Par-
Act. 2. 5. *thians*—besides a Multitude of other Instances.

Such were the Attestations given to Christ (*the Author and finisher of our faith.*)

2. And for the Apostles (the Promulgers of it) besides the Change of their Spirits from darkness to light, Whereby they were led out of Ignorance and Infidelity, into all Truth. And from torpid and pusillanimous persons, during the life of their Master, they became, when he was dead, the most active and magnanimous in the world. (I say, besides this Change) They had bestowed upon them, All things necessary, either for their 1. Own Assurance, or for the 2. Conviction of the World. (Concerning the truth of the Gospel which they delivered.)

1. As for themselves, besides the Con-

Converſation with their Maſter before and after his Reſurrection; they had 1. Apparitions of Angels. And to one of them Chriſt himſelf appeared after he was aſcended to his father.

2 They had the *Bath Kol*, (Voices from Heaven.) In the 9 of the *Acts*, we find a Voice from Heaven maintaining a Dialogue with *Paul*; and at another time, *a voice ſaying to Peter, Ariſe Peter, Kill and Eat.*

3. They had extatical Viſions. *Peter* was *in a trance* (Act 10. 10, 19.) *Paul rapt up to the third heaven.* Act. 22. 17. 2 Cor. 12. 2.

4. They had monitory Dreams. *Paul* ſaw a man in a Dream, ſaying unto him, Come into *Macedonia* and help us.

5. They had Impulſes of the Spirit; So Paul was *forbid by the Spirit*, to preach the Word in *Aſia.* Act. 16. 9.

II. And for the Conviction of the

the unbelieving World,

1 Cor. 12. They had diverſities of gifts and different Adminiſtrations. *To one was given the Word of Wiſdom, to another the Word of Knowledge, to another Faith, to another the gift of Healing, to another Miracles, Propheſies, Diſcerning of Spirits, The gift of Tongues.*

As it is in the words which I quoted, *God bare them witneſs with gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, and with Signs and Wonders*; and that he did, ſo far, that I ſhall be juſtified by Chriſt himſelf, if I ſhall affirm,

Joh. 14 12. that the Apoſtles after his death, did greater miracles then he himſelf did in his life.

Of the ſame kind with our Saviours, ſome they performed, by means having an appearance of greater ſtrangeneſs, (Chriſt healed by his touch, his word, his ſpittle,

Peter

Peter by his *ſhadow*, *Paul* by *Handkerchiefs* taken from his body.) But one great thing there was, wherein they exceeded; The Great and Manifeſt, and frequent Effuſions of the Spirit, the Reception of it upon themſelves, the communication of it to others, by Prayer, Preaching, Laying on of Hands; By theſe it was that the unbelieving world was convinced, and even *Simon Magus* himſelf; It is by the power and Vertue of thoſe effuſions that we are here met together at this time, that the World continues Chriſtian at this day. And theſe are ſome of thoſe ſtanding means and Arguments, whereby the proneneſs of our hearts to infidelity may be overcome; and faith may be begotten, confirmed, recovered at this day: Theſe are therefore to be revolved,

Exhort

Exhort one another dayly. To come therefore to a Concluſion.

My text it ſelf is an Application, by way of Exhortation; Exhortations are enforced by Reaſons of Duty and Concernment, and theſe I have hitherto endeavoured to lay before you.

If indeed there were no Sinfulneſs in Infidelity, Or, if in ſuch times as ours, it were excuſable. If there were no danger of falling into it, or no means left to remedy or prevent it; it would then indeed be to little purpoſe to Exhort men to beware.

But if the ſtate of all theſe things is otherwiſe, if that be plain and evident; agreeable to Scripture, to Reaſon and to Experience; if the Speaker hath not beaten the Air, nor the hearers been careleſs and inattentive, I know not what can be

be required, to enforce and ſharpen the exhortation.

If the time would ſuffer it, and I were ſpeaking to a Common or Injudicious Auditory, I might think my ſelf concerned, after all that hath been ſpoken to the underſtanding, to Apply my diſcourſe to your affections, I ſhould take unto me the various forms of Application uſed in this Epiſtle. I would *Reprove*, *Rebuke*, *Exhort*; I would *cry aloud*, *and* would *not ſpare*. I would *lift up my voice like a* Watchmans *trumpet*, warning you from the Lord, concerning the Spirit of irreligion and infidelity which is ſaid to have overſpread the land.

I would *take* to my ſelf *a Lamentation*, *yea it ſhould be for a Lamentation*, for the Profeſſors of Infidelity, and the Infidelity of Profeſſors,

Profeſſors, every where. But I may not now be permitted to enlarge upon theſe things. I may only pray to God to give you underſtanding in all things, and beſeech you earneſtly to conſider what hath been ſpoken, Concluding in the words of the Text, *Take heed, brethren, leſt there be in any of you, an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. Exhort one another dayly.*—

FINIS.

Die Jovis 11° Octobris, 1666.

ORdered by the Lords *Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, That the thanks of this House be given to the Lord Bishop of* Exon. *for his Pains in the Service he performed in Preaching a* Sermon *before the* Peers *in the Abby-Church at* Westminster *yesterday, being the day appointed by His* Majesty *for* Fasting *and* Humiliation, *in consideration of the late* Dreadful Fire *which wasted the greater part of the City of* London: *And that his Lordship be, and is hereby desired to Print and Publish his said Sermon.*

John Browne *Cler. Parliam.*

A

SERMON

Preached before the

PEERS,

IN THE

Abby-Church at *Weſtminſter*:

October 10th. M. DC. LXVI.

BY

SETH then Lord Biſhop of *EXON.*

LONDON,

Printed by *A. C.* for *James Collins*, at the Kings Arms within *Ludgate* near St. *Pauls*, 1672.

R

A SERMON

Preached before the

Houſe of Peers

AT

WESTMINSTER.

ECCLES. xi. 9.

—But know that for all theſe things God will bring thee to Judgment. Rejoyce O young man, — &c.

THE great and general deſign of the Miniſtry and preaching of the Goſpel, is to bring men to Chriſtianity; not in the outward profeſſion, but in the true ſpirit and power thereof; to

the end they may be justified and sanctified, and finally saved through Christ for ever.

The Particular design of this Dayes Observation is to *humble our selves under the mighty hand of God*, in Consideration of his Judgments, especially that late one in consuming with Fire the Ancient and noble *Metropolis* of this Nation; and to endeavour to appease the wrath of God gone out against us.

To compass both these designs (whereof the later is subordinate to the former) I know no better expedient, than to reason a while upon that important argument suggested in the Text.

Who can think upon the Conflagration of our late Glorious City, and not call to mind the great and terrible day of Judgment?

Who can think seriously of Judgment,

Judgment, and not be compelled to come in, (driven to Christianity) that he may be *saved from the wrath to come?*

The great Instructor and Example of Christian Preachers (he who saith of himself, that *Christ sent him to preach and not to baptize*) found no means so powerful to perswade men to Christianity, as to reason upon this argument; as first to lay before them the terror of Judgment, and then (whilst that was warm upon their hearts) to make them a tender of the Gospel. This is the great advantage and use the Apostle makes of the Doctrine of the Text. *We must all appear* (saith he) *before the Judgment-seat of Christ, --Knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord, we perswade men.* 2 Cor. 5. 10, 11.

Upon these Considerations I

ſhall hope for the pardon of this Noble Auditory, if (without affectation of Science) I ſhall, in a practical and familiar way of reaſoning, indeavour to imitate our Apoſtle in this particular.

If in the mean time it will be irkſome and unpleaſant to hear of the Judgment to come, we ſhall do well to conſider what it will be to undergo it; we ſhall do well to reflect upon our Souls, and ſearch out the ground of this averſneſs; Is it becauſe we do not believe a Judgment to come? or that we our ſelves ſhall be brought to Judgment? Is it becauſe we never conſider, who it is before whom we muſt appear? or, what things will be charged on our account? Is it becauſe we are ſo far gone in our arrears that it is to no purpoſe to call theſe things into our

our remembrance? --What ever it be, we may perhaps hear of that which may meet with and remove the prejudice and impoſture that is upon us. It is neither our Negligence nor Infidelity that will *make void the Truth of God.* Whether we will hear, or Whether we will forbear, the Words which I have read remain firm and unalterable, and they clearly contain theſe Propoſitions:

1. There is a Judgment to come.

2. Thou ſhall be brought to Judgment.

3. God will bring thee to Judgment.

4. God will bring thee to Judgment for theſe things, the ways of thy heart, *&c.*

5. God will bring thee to Judgment for All theſe things.

6. All this is certain and evi-

dent; for it is not *think*, or *believe*, but — *Know that for all these things God will bring thee to Judgment.*

I. First then, *There is a Judgment to come.* This is no Politick invention found out to fright thee from thy pleasures; this is no Engine of State devised to keep you in a subordination to your Brethren; this is no vain Thunder or foolish fire, to affright you in to a blind obedience, but it is the Tenor of the Scripture of the voyce of God, *King Agrippa believest thou the the Prophets? I know that thou believest,* (saith St. *Paul.*) Brethren do we believe the Scriptures? I hope we do believe them; This we do all profess to believe, so often as we repeat our Creed; and I hope the dissolution of our times has not yet shatter'd that foundation of our faith, the ground work of our hopes,

hopes, even the Salvation of our ſouls. Surely there are rewards for men; *doubtleſs there is a God which judgeth the earth.* What though the foundations of the world be out of courſe, the pillar of Faith remains unſhaken; *the Rod of the ungodly ſhall not for ever reſt upon the back of the righteous*: I deſire to make a little uſe of your faith for that which anon will be obtained from your reaſon. There is a Judgment to come, it's as ſure as death, nay far ſurer; they ſhall be judged which ſhall not dy, they have been judged which could not dy; the one at the end, the other at the beginning of the world.

There is a Particular and a General Judgment; the one at the diſſolution of the leſſer, the other of the greater world; the one at the hour of death, the other at the day

of

of Judgment. A Judgment I ſay, a ſtrict examination, an exact account, a ſevere ſentence; words which make no thundring noiſe, or tragical ſound, and ſo they may paſs our hardned hearts without any motion; wherefore let us judge of the tenor and moment of them by their antecedent ſigns.

Before one of them, the evil days come: The other is called *the evil day*. Before one, *Solomon* tells us, that *the Sun, and the Moon, and the Light, and the Stars ſhall be darkned*: Before the other, a greater than *Solomon* tells us, that *the Sun ſhall be turned into Darkneſs, and the Moon into Blood, and the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven*. Before one, *the Keepers of the Houſe ſhall tremble, and the Strong men bow themſelves*; Before the other, *the Mountains ſhall quake, and the Powers of Heaven*

ſhall

shall be shaken: Before one, *we shall rise at the voyce of the Bird*; Before the other, *at the sound of the Trumpet*. Before one, *the silver Cord shall be loosed, and the golden Bowl broken, and the Pitcher broken at the Fountain, and the wheel broken at the Cistern*: Before the other, the silver Zone of the ecliptick, and the golden Globe of the Sun, the Orbs, and the Vortices shall be confounded, (the *wheel within a wheel*) the *Heavens shall be rivel'd as a scrowl of Parchment*, and the Earth and *the Elements shall melt away with fervant heat*. In the one, the *dust shall return to the earth as it was, and and the spirit to God that gave it*: At the other, the dust shall return from the earth to be as it was, and the spirit from God that gave it.

Come now and let us reason together.

Are

Are all these the fore-runners and symptomes of approaching Judgment? then why art thou so drowsie O my careless soul, and why are thou so secure within me? What strange Lethargy hath seised on thee? *Awake thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give the light.* The time of thy dissolution is coming, and after death, the Judgment. Retire therefore a while into thy self, and commune with thy heart: Enter thou into thy Closet, and shut thy Door upon thee: Let us examine our selves before we come to that strict Examen: Let us make a Judgment of our expectation before we come to Judgment. Do we believe a Judgment will come? Then how are we provided against that Day? Are our accounts ready? Art thou able to stand in Judgment? Shalt thou be

clear

clear when thou art judged? When *Paul reasoned* before *Felix concerning the Judgment to come, Felix trembled*; and because it was an unpleasant argument, *he put him off to another time.*

There is no doubt but our treacherous hearts would gladly put off these Considerations, and deferr them to a more convenient season. Nay! but there is no time so convenient as the present, when we are wrought into some apprehension of Judgment: if we stay till our present thoughts are over, we shall again be brought to lose the apprehension (to forget the import and moment) of the Judgment; we shall come again to hear the Name thereof, and to neglect it as an idle Noise, and empty Sound.

Let us therefore not neglect this opportunity; Let us search our selves

ſeleves to the bottom; Let us make a diſcovery of our final Reſolution, and ſecret Reſerves in reference to Judgment. We profeſs openly to believe that Chriſt ſhall come with Glory, to judge both the Quick and Dead; What are our inward thoughts in that particular? and how are we provided againſt the Day of Judgment?

There is a Judgment to come, that Judgment terrible, the Examination ſtrict, the Condemnation inſupportable, and moſt of us utterly unprovided; yet for all this, it's poſſible it may be avoyded. All theſe things are true in Judgments here below, and we ſee the proof of them at every Aſſizes; yet all Offenders are not brought to Judgment, but many Thieves and Murderers eſcape it: It may be thus in the Judgment to come; it's poſſible

possible it may be avoidable.

A miserable hope, if this be all; II.
for *Thou shalt be brought to Judgment*: That's the second Proposition.

And it contains the Universality or Particularity of the Judgment, (which you please:) thou, and every man, *singuli generum, & genera singulorum*; all sorts of men, and every man of every sort, from *Him that sitteth on the Throne*, to *Her that grindeth in the Mill*: For *we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ*. It *is appointed for all men once to dy, and after death the Judgment*. Death shall deliver up our Souls to the first, and death shall deliver up our Bodies to the second Judgment. The Grave shall deliver up her spoils, and the bodies of all men, devoured of Beasts, consumed of Fire, swallowed by the Sea, scattered

tered to the four Winds, *in a moment, in the twinckling of an eye,* shall be brought to Judgment.

And here shall I bewail the infirmity, or inveigh against the negligence of us Men, that suffer our selves to be hurried headlong by the power of our imaginations against the striving of our Consciences; that suffer our Senses to carry away the crown from our Understanding, and give over our selves to the impetuous stream of our passions: That when we have a full information, a compleat judgment, a clear dictate of conscience, we will suffer all these to be overborn in us by the *Idola Specûs, Tribûs, &c.* which are brought into our imaginations: That having clear and evident Principles, we can yet doubt of their immediate consequences; or whilest we profess an

universal

universal reach, never descend to think of the particulars.

We know there is a vast difference between the things present, and those to come; and yet we form our thoughts of those, according to the analogy of these, deluding our selves with idle and childish imaginations. God keeps silence; *we think he is such an one as we: Vengeance is not presently executed, we set our hearts to do wickedly.* We profess that all men must die, and come to judgment; yet we do not really believe that we our selves shall dy, and come to judgment. This is the fountain of our misery, and the original of our spiritual miscarriages: the discovery of the causes and remedy whereof, lies deep in the Philosophy concerning Humane Nature; but the thing it self is of every days observation: we

may recount it in these authentical examples. *David* knew full well what belong'd to Murder and Adultery, and what himself had done in the matter of *Uriah*; yet he cried not out that he had sinned, till *Nathan* had charged him, *Thou art the man.*

Ahab undoubtedly had read the Law of *Moses*, and knew the guilt of Murder and Oppression; yet he goes on triumphantly, he kills, and also takes possession: but when *Elijah* charges hime home, *In the field of Jezreel shall Dogs lick thy blood, even thine*, then he cries out, *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?* (1 Kings 21.) and having applyed things to his particular, he *Rent his Cloaths, and put on sackcloth, he fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly.*

Once more: 'Tis likely *Belshaz-*

zar

zar had a general Judgment, and an universal Maxime in his mind, That it was unlawful to spoil the House of God, to plunder those things which were dedicated to the Lord, and to debauch in the Bowls of the Temple, and probably he had seen the hand-writing of the book of God to that purpose: yet all this does not restrain him: But when the *Fingers write upon the Wall, Mene, Mene,* &c. *thou art weighed,* &c. then *his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, the joynts of his loyns were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.* This then is the Office of this second Proposition, it charges us home, it lays down the Universal, and it brings it down to the Particular.

Thou shalt be brought to Judgment. Thy Judgment is unavoidable.

O but then thy Evasion is crossed, O my stupid Soul! Thou art spoyled of thy frivolous ground of hope: Thou shalt surely be cited, and thou must appear, if thou refuse to come thou shalt be brought to Judgment. Return then again into thy self, and take a review of thy condition; what will the issue be of that Judgment to which thou must be brought? What hopes are now remaining that thou shalt not be condemned? when the *Officers have haled thee before the Judge*, that *thou be* not *delivered to the Executioners.*

If thou art called to Examination, Canst thou elude thy Judge by thy wily Answers? or Canst thou baffle or suborn the Witnesses? Canst thou work off thy Jury not to find the Verdict? or bribe the Judge to favour thee in thy Doom?

Canst

Canſt thou withdraw him from the Rigour of Juſtice by the mediation of thy friends, or melt him into compaſſion by the loudneſs of thy cries, the ſadneſs of thy lamentation? Canſt thou procure a Reverſion or Reprieve of thy ſentence, or appeal from thy Judge unto another? Canſt thou make an eſcape from thine Executioner? Or laſtly, Canſt thou ſtoutly endure the ſentence of Condemnation? Theſe are the hopes of men here brought to Judgement, and why may not ſome of them be mine? No, thou knoweſt, O treacherous heart, all theſe to be fond impoſſibilities, dreams, and ſuggeſtions of a childiſh fancy; if once this day be over, and that time come, thy hopes are barely theſe, that Omniſcience and Wiſdom it ſelf may be deluded by ſtupidity, that

Omnipotence and Power it ſelf may be evaded by poor contemptible infirmity, that Severity and Juſtice it ſelf may be perverted by iniquity; all this is evident by that which follows: *For we muſt all appear before the Judgment ſeat of Chriſt.*

III. *God will bring thee to Judgment.*

And here we are concerned to raiſe our thoughts, and employ the utmoſt of our attention, leſt by the prejudice which our Idleneſs hath brought upon us, *we treaſure up wrath to* our ſelves *againſt that day* of Judgment. 'Tis true, we daily hear of God, and receive the names of his Attributes into our ears, but we paſs over his Name as if he were like to us, and never beſtow ſo much labour as to attain to a conſiderable notion of thoſe names. O that the God of Heaven would

would afford us here some glimpse of himself; That he would illustrate us with some beam of his Majesty; That he would be pleased to visit every unprovided soul, and insinuate into it a full and clear apprehension of this Proposition — *God will &c* —

But how shall we endure to see his face? *No man can see my face and live*, (Exod. 33.) if the *Israelites* durst not hear him proclaim the Law, how shall we endure to hear him denounce the Judgment? If the Angels veil their faces, not able to behold his Excellency, how shall we be affected with his terrors? If the Cherubims are oppressed with the sight of his glory, what shall we be with the sense of his fury? If we find our selves confounded and swallowed up into inextricable Labyrinths, when we

ſet our ſelves to conſider of his immanent Attributes, of his eternal Duration, his unbounded Eſſence, his unconfined Preſence: With what diſpoſition can we entertain the terror of his Judgment, the ſearch of his Omniſcience, the ſtroke of his Omnipotence? If the beſt and choiceſt of the Saints of God, have been afraid and trembled at the thoughts of Judgment, if they have been ſurpriſed with horror and confuſion at the meer imagination of that Dreadful voice, *Ariſe and come to Judgment*, what ſhall the worſt and moſt obdurate ſinners, when they ſhall be ſtript of this cloud of fleſh and error, and cited before the great tribunal, there to render an account of their Creation, Preſervation, and Redemption?

What fear, what horror, what agony will poſſeſs thee, O ſinful ſoul,

soul, when thou shalt be brought into a perfect apprehension of thy Judge, and of thy self, and he shall begin to order out before thee the things which he hath done; when the whole Trinity shall begin to unfold its common work, and that sacred Person blessed for ever, upon whose *shoulders the Judgment is laid*, shall unfold to thee his peculiar, and thou must render a severe account of thy returns?

When the mystery of thy Creation shall be unveiled to thee: When thou shalt apprehend throughly, what it is to have been fetcht out of the dark and barren shade of an eternal privation to be put in a capacity of glory. When he shall recount to thee the proceedings of his handy work, the method of thy making, the several articles and gradations of his Providence in the form-

formation and information of thee. How at first he *poured thee out like milk, and crudled thee cheese*; How he spun out thine arteries and veins, and *whilst thou wert yet in thy blood, he said unto thee, live*: How he guarded thee with muscles, and strengthened thee with sinews, and propt thee with bones, and covered thee with skin, furnished thee with organs, endowed them with senses, invested thee with reason, crowned thee with freedom, enlightned thee with principles of Science and Conscience, bounded thee by his Precepts, encouraged thee by his Promises, restrained thee by his threatnings. When he shall run over the benefits of thy daily preservation, and rigorously examine what thou hast done for him.

When God the Son shall display to thee what he hath done and suffered

ſuffered for thee, and ſhall ſet before thine eyes the great myſtery of thy Redemption; When he ſhall bring thee to apprehend the price that he has paid, that ranſom which thou haſt not regarded: When it will not be in thy power to paſs over theſe conſiderations as now thou doſt; but they ſhall be forced into the eſſential center of thy Soul: When thou ſhalt have a clear ſight of the abaſement of a God incarnate: When thou ſhalt know how to be moved at the ſight of a deſpiſed and an abuſed Godhead

When he ſhall charge thee with the blewneſs of thoſe ſtripes, and the ghaſtlineſs of thoſe wounds which thou haſt made: When he ſhall rehearſe to thee the miſeries of his life, and the circumſtances of his death: When he ſhall recount to thee the woundings of the taunts and

and reproaches, the ſmart of the whips, the terrour of the agony, which made him ſweat great drops of blood, the pricks of the thorns, the piercing of the nails, the launcing of the ſpear, and the ineffable horror of the dereliction, when he cried out in the bitterneſs of his ſoul, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* And when he ſhall fiercely call upon thee to anſwer for the wounds that thou haſt made, to render him his blood that thou haſt ſpilt, to account to him for that life which thou haſt bereft, to ſhew him the fruit of all his pains and ſufferings, to preſent him thy returns for all theſe benefits and favours; then tell me what thou wilt anſwer, O ſtupid ſoul. How art thou provided to reply?

Wilt thou deny that he has done theſe

these things for thee? or canst thou shew as much for him? Hast thou returned him that being which he hath given thee, and so been even with him in a form of words, though that come infinitely short indeed? Hast thou sacrificed thy self for his benefit, or abased thy self for his commodity? What wilt thou plead when thou art called? The time is coming, thy Judgment hastning, thine account is unavoidable, thy Judge inexorable.

Alas! what could I have done for him? what profit could I have brought him? if I should have pined away in the exercise of Devotion, and been eaten up with zeal? If I should have *spent my substance in Burnt-Offerings, or Calves of a year old?* If I should have presented him *with thousands of Rams, or ten thou-*

sand

ſand Rivers of Oil? To what purpoſe then ſhould I endeavour that, which I could not have performed? Why ſhould I trouble my ſelf with vain attempts, and ſpend my ſtrength about that, which I never could accompliſh? neither if I be righteous is he the better; nor if I be wicked is he the worſe: *our goodneſs extends not to him; if thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him? if thou be righteous, what receiveth he at thine hand?* Is this then the evaſion? I need not ſtand to unfold the diſingenuity, the ſtupor and madneſs of this evaſion. However though theſe things ſhall be urged upon us, they are not all; theſe offer themſelves in the conſideration of the perſon of the Judge, but are not all the matter of thy Judgment. For

IV. *Thou ſhall be brought to Judg-*

ment

ment for these things; there is the matter of thy Judgment.

For All these things; there is the extent. Because this latter adds only a Modality to the former, and I desire not to be over tedious, we will put these two together. V.

And now we are descended from those less familiar Considerations, to which we were forced to strein our understandings in the contemplation of our Judge, into the compass of our own sphere, to the survey of our own operations; we are come from the incomprehensible ways of God, to the ways of our own hearts. *Walk in the ways of thy heart*, &c. and, *But know*, &c. In the judgment of this life men are tryed by the works of their hands, or the words of their mouths; for theft or murder, for slander or Treason men may be

be brought to Judgment, but thought is free, he has lived well that has carried his crimes close, the crafty Politician and the concealed Hypocrite escape: Here the case is quite contrary, the Judgment takes in primarily the ways of the heart, and the words and actions as they proceed from them. Wherefore let us withdraw a space into our selves, and endeavour to unfold the extent of that Proposition. For all the ways of the hearts of men, God will bring them to Judgment.

How would it trouble us to recount and bring to memory every thought but of one only day? and how many disorders and irregularities should we find in such a reflection? How do our thoughts flote upon our brains, and we know neither whence they come, nor what

what becomes of them? When they are broken in upon our minds we cannot hold them, and when they are gone from us (as it was with *Nebuchadnezzar*'s dream) it is not in our power to recover them. How many roving fancies present themselves unto us in a moment; and how many sudden and imperfect Complacencies and distastes are raised by them? Leave but thy self unbound, unfixed (by hearing, or reading, or business, &c.) for an hour, and then tell me what suppositions and consequences, and resolutions thou hast made? And how thou hast felt thy self to strein upon the borders of Lust or Envy, of Pride or Anger, of Discontent or Melancholy. O that you would but reflect a little upon your souls, and consider how many wandring thoughts

have broken in upon your minds since I began to speak of this important Subject. You might save me the labour of further speaking and raise your selves to that which I endeavour: I fear you might find among your sacred thoughts, a mixture of others very unsuitable; your envious, your ambitious, your covetous, your idle thoughts. All these are the matter of our future Judgment, and however they slightly pass us here, they are noted in the Book of God; and when that Book shall be opened, they will be charged on our account. *Thou tellest my wanderings*, (saith the Psalmist) *Are not these things noted in thy Book?* I have already said enough to take up the consideration of the remainer of our time: But our hearts being too heavy, and our ears too dull of hearing

ing to be moved with generals, I must crave leave that I may be permitted to run over the heads of some particulars.

Thou must give an account of all things committed to thee, Inward or Outward, Natural or Spiritual, thy senses and thy understanding, thine Outward and thine Inward faculties.

If thou hast been as a constant covenant with thine eyes, and hast never suffered them to rove in loose disorders: If thou hast bowed thine ears to discipline, and never let them open to vain entertainments: If thy taste hath been moderated by the necessities of nature, and the laws of temperance, and never let loose according to the lust of Riot: If thy hands have been wholly employed in the works of God, and never been instruments to the

machinations of the Devil: If thy ſpeech have never uttered any idle words, but ever *adminiſtred grace to the hearers*: If thy feet have only traced the ways of God, and never *ſtood in the way of ſinners*.

What hath been the exerciſe of thine inward faculties, thine Apprehenſions and thine Appetite? If thy fancie hath ever been imployed in adminiſtring help to thine underſtanding, and never afforded incentives to thy vile affections: If thy memory have been taken up with the things which God hath done, and Chriſt hath ſuffered for thee, and hath afforded no place to Ribaldry and vanity: How thou haſt ordered thine Anger and Concupiſcence: What have been the object, meaſure, and end, and circumſtances, of thy love, hatred, deſire, averſion, delight, ſadneſs, hope,

hope, despair, fear, boldness, anger, envie, jealousie, and compassion.

How thou hast managed thine understanding, and improved thy contemplative and active principles. If thou hast advanced in the discovery of eternal verities, or herded with the beasts that perish: If thou hast cherished the principles of thy *Synteresis*, and the dictates and reflections of thy conscience, and never rebelled against them: How thou hast determined the freedom of thy Will, in thy volition and intention, thine election and consent, fruition and use, when Good and Evil, Life and Death have been set before thee.

How thou hast behaved thy self in Spirituals, in gifts and graces. If thou hast accepted that which hath been offered, and improved

what thou hast accepted, or hid it in a Napkin. In outward things, how thou hast acquired, and how thou hast managed thine Estate: How thou hast behaved thy self in thy Relations publick and private, in thy charge, and in thy duty. — But the time would fail me to reckon up a considerable part of the exercises and objects of the wayes of the hearts of Men: And now all these and many more, are but the simple elements, and common heads of our account.

Consider then, O negligent and incogitant soul! if thou couldst reckon up the ways of thy heart, in any one of these kinds; if thou couldst call to mind but every idle word whereof thou must give an account, or thy motions upon every thing thou hast heard, and remember in any one of these elements,

what

what thou hast done or else omitted. Then tell me how wouldst thou find thy self possessed, and how wouldst thou be disposed to Judgment? Wouldst thou deem it needless or idle to call it betimes to thy remembrance? Wouldst thou drive off thy thoughts of it to the time of sickness, to the hour of death, and rudely throw thy self upon it? --But then try, and examine all these together, contemplate a little upon the mixtures and combinations of them; these will afford us many millions of millions of wayes (far exceeding the varieties of the corporeal nature, which proceed from the mixture of fewer elements) so many as will utterly confound our thoughts to number. Who can reckon up the wayes of the hearts of the children of Men? Who can understand his errours?

And now, that he that hath the World to uphold, the Planets and Stars to guide, the course of nature to maintain, should keep a Register of our impertinencies, and bring to Judgment all the wayes of Men; (the traces of a Ship in the Sea, of a Serpent upon a Rock) who hath believed our report? we are apt to think it cannot be. Surely he sees not these things: Tush he cares not for them. This is indeed the last resort of the treacherous hearts of men, the grand imposture which resolves into a species of Atheism and Infidelity. O but then, if I shall use the language of the Scriptures, I must call thee fool and beast, to doubt of that which is plain and evident, to disbelieve that which may be known. This Article concerning the Judgment to come, is not a problem of Philosophy to be disputed

disputed this way and that way with equal probability; neither is it only an Article of faith, but it is a principle of natural Theology, the Scripture speaks of it under terms of greater evidence St. *Paul* reasoned with *Felix*, he disputed with the Philosophers concerning it, he speaks of the terror of Judgment under terms of certainty, and of a kind of Demonstrative evidence; *Knowing the terror of the Law*, &c. and hear in the Text, it is not said, *Think*, or *believe*; But *know that for all these things God will bring thee to Judgment.*

VI. He is a fool that hath said in his heart there is no God, and he that thinks he hath no understanding may well be compared to the beasts that *perish*: & so sure as there is a God, and that man hath an understanding soul, so surely it may be known,

That

That for all these things, &c. For if there be a God, he must be infinitely just; and if so, he must render to every one according to their actions; and if not here, then hereafter; and if so, he must bring them to Judgment. But he doth it not here: The ways of Providence seem to be promiscuous, *there is a wicked man to whom it happens according to the way of the righteous, and a righteous man to whom it happens according to the way of the wicked.* *Dives* receives pleasure, *Lazarus* pain; therefore so sure as there is a God, there will be a Judgment.

Eccles 8. 14.

IV. Again, If man have an understanding soul, he must have freedom in his actions; and if so, he deserves either good or evil; and if there be deserts, there must be rewards; and if there be rewards, there must be a Judgment. So then, so sure as thou art

are an understanding creature, so sure there is a Judgment to come.

Once more, Reward is answerable to desert; and desert is only in what is free; and what is free in man is the ways of his heart: wherefore they are to be brought to Judgment, and if any, then all: for no reason can be fancied, why some should be brought to Judgment, and others not. Wherefore, if it be sure that God is in Heaven, and that Man hath an understanding soul, then it is also sure that for all these things God will bring thee to Judgment, that God shall bring to judgment every secret thing.

And now how sure and evident are these things? more sure and more plain, if we will attend, than any other truths in the world; for there is not any known truth which doth not evict the truth of these things.

things. We know a truth, becauſe we plainly and evidently underſtand the compoſition or diviſion of the notions in a Propoſition, or the Deduction of a Propoſition from ſome others; therefore if we know any truth, we preſuppoſe that we have ſouls which underſtand the notions of things, and if ſouls which underſtand theſe notions, then to be ſure they are not bodies, (no combination of fire and air, and earth, and water, no diſpoſition of inſenſible atomes can cauſe the ſubject to apprehend and judge, to reaſon and diſcourſe) and if they be no bodies, then they are not ſubject to corruption: It is evident therefore that our ſouls are underſtanding and alſo immortal, deſerving and capable of future Judgment.

And as evident it is alſo that there is a ſoveraign Power, a God that governs

verum and will Judge the Earth.

This is not a Rhetorical undertaking, but a just and measured truth; there is not any thing in the world from whence these two may not be plainly and evidently evicted, *viz.* a Godhead from the Creature, and thine own Immortality from the discovery of a Godhead. The world which thou seest, had it a beginning, or had it not? if it had a beginning, he is thy God that made it; if it had no beginning, then there are past as many myriads of years as minutes of time, which is infinitely more absurd to grant, than to say, thou hast as many hands as fingers, as many wholes as parts.

If then at any time we find our selves to doubt of these things, it is not because we are the *beaux esprits*, or *forts esprits*; our doubting proceeds from dulness, and the want of that

that strong reason to which we do pretend, the things are certain in themselves and evident. *He is not far from any one of us; in whom we live, and move, and have our being*; and the Light of nature discovered our Immortality not only to Philosophers, but even to the Heathen Poets, to him that sung to us, that, *We are also his off-spring*.

So that now thy pretences are all taken off, and every imposture of the heart discovered.

Applic. general. Return then once again into thy bosome, and take account of thy apprehensions; The day of the Lord is coming and stealing upon thee as a thief in the night, the day of Judgment, the great and terrible day. A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of a whirlwind and a tempest, a day of anguish and tribulation: Where wilt thou hide thy self?

O

O that's impossible, *Where shall we go then from his presence?* shall we *call to the Mountains to fall upon us?* How wilt thou appear? O that's intolerable, *for our God is a consuming fire.* What wilt thou do when the day of Judgment comes, and this may be the hour, this minute thou mayest be smitten and hurried hence to Judgment? Thousands have fallen besides us, and ten thousands at our right hand, and why may not we be next?

The time of our particular Judgment cannot be far away, and why may we not reasonably apprehend the approach of the General Judgment, either of this World, or at leastwise of this sinful Nation?

Our Lord Christ indeed tells us, that *of the day and hour of the final* Judgment, *Knoweth no man.* Yet he hath given us the signs of his coming:

coming: The Apostles have left us Characters of the last days, the Prophets have declared the manner and *apparatus* of the coming of the Lord to Judgment.

We read that when the Disciples admired the stones and the buildings of *Herod*'s Temple at *Jerusalem*; Christ told them, *That the day was coming when there should not be left one stone upon another*: upon this the Disciples ask him (privately) three Questions. 1. *When shall these things be?* 2. *What shall be the sign of thy second coming?* And 3. *of the end of the World?*

As for the precise moment of these things, he denies to tell it them; (Nay, he professes, that as he was the Son of Man he did not know it.) But for the other two he condescends to their curiosity, he tells them the signs of his coming, and

of

of the end of the World, and that they ſhall be ſuch as theſe;

You ſhall hear, ſaith he, (Matth 24.) *of Wars and rumours of Wars, Nation riſing againſt Nation, and Kingdom againſt Kingdom.* There ſhall be *Traytors* and *falſe Prophets*, Saying, *Lo! here is Chriſt*, Behold! (a new Meſſias) *in the Wilderneſs*: *Lo! there is Chriſt*, Behold! *he is* (at a Conventicle) *in the ſecret Chambers*: He tells us, that *iniquity ſhall abound, and the love of many ſhall wax cold*, that *he ſhall hardly find faith on the earth*, as *it was in the dayes of Noe, they ate, they drank, till the flood came and ſwept them all away; ſo ſhall the coming of the Son of Man be.*

He tells us (*Luke* 21.) *there ſhall be Famines and Earthquakes, Peſtilence, and fearful ſights, great ſigns from Heaven; in the Earth diſtreſs of Nations, great perplexities, the Sea and Waves*

roaring; Mens hearts failing them for fear, looking after those things that are coming upon the Earth.

Concerning the last dayes, St. *Paul* tells us, that there shall be *perilous times*; that on one hand there shall be a sort of men, that shall be *lovers of themselves, Covetous, Proud, Boasters, Ranters, and Blasphemers.*

On the other hand there shall be a Race of *heady, high minded Traytors, having a form of godliness, creeping into houses, leading captive silly women.* They shall *despise Dominion, and speak evil of Dignities*; they shall be Separatists from the Church, and false pretenders to the Spirit. *These*, saith St. *Jude, are they that separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit,*

St. *Peter* tells us, that in the last times there should be a loose, prophane, a bold Atheistical Gigantick race of *scoffers, walking after their own lusts,*

lusts, saying, *Where is* this God of *Judgment*? let him make speed and haſten his work, that we may ſee it. *Where is the promiſe his of coming? ſince the fathers fell aſleep all things continue as they were before.*

And for the manner and *Apparatus* of his coming, *Our God ſhall come* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *and ſhall not keep ſilence, there ſhall go before him a devouring fire, and a mighty Tempeſt ſhall be ſtirred up round about him.*

Behold! the Lord will come with fire (ſaith the Prophet) *and with his Chariots like a Whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebukes with flames of fire. The ſtreams of Zion ſhall be turned into Pitch, and the duſt thereof into Brimſtone; the Earth thereof ſhall be burning Pitch, the ſmoke thereof ſhall aſcend day and night,* and ſhall *not be quenched*, [compare *Apoc.* 6. with *Eſai.* 34.] Eſai. 66. 15.

The Kings of the Earth ſhall tremble, the Captains and the mighty ſhall be horribly afraid, the great men and the rich men ſhall hide themſelves, all the bond-men and all the freemen ſhall fly to the Rocks of the Mountains. And ſoon after all this, *The Heavens ſhall be rivel'd as a ſcrowl, the Earth and the Elements ſhall melt away*; for *God ſhall ariſe to judge terribly the Earth.*

Have not all theſe things come upon us, the men of this Generation? Is it weakneſs, is it a vain and ſuperſtitious ſcrupuloſity to call theſe things to our remembrance? Have we no reaſon at all to apprehend the approach of a General Judgment, either upon the World, or upon our ſinful Nation?

Do we not now envy thoſe deſpiſed ſouls which have made their accounts ready? We thought it madneſs

madness to see them pine away with pœnitential exercises, and macerate themselves with mourning. We thought it folly which they called Conscience, for which they denyed themselves the pleasures and enjoyments of the World. *We fools counted their life madness, and their latter end to be without honour.* But the time is coming *when they* shall be *comforted, and we* shall be *tormented. Because he hath called and we have refused, he hath stretched out his hand, and we have not regarded, He will laugh at our calamity, and mock when our fear cometh. When our destruction cometh as a Whirlwind, when distress and anguish comes upon us.*

May we not therefore give up our selves to the torments of our hearts, and surrender up our souls unto Despair? so *Israel* said, *there is no hope, we will follow every one the devices of his heart*: after 20, 30 or 40

years continuance in our courſes, 'tis in vain to think of turning from them. Our arrears are ſo far gone, that there is no hope to diſcharge them; and why ſhould we trouble our ſelves with the thoughts of our Account? Nay, that which muſt come, let it come, and what is a few days reſpite to Eternity? *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we ſhall dye.* Let us go forth as at other times, and ſhake our ſelves and ſcatter theſe troubleſom apprehenſions of future Judgment. What if we ſhould drink a little to drive away Melancholy? Yes! and fall perhaps, and ſpew, and riſe no more.

Nay, but I beſeech you, ſtay a little, and conſider, conſider *at leaſt in this your day the things which belong to your peace: It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God; Who among us can dwell with a de-*

vouring

vouring fire? Who among us can dwell with everlasting burnings?

Such careless and desperate resolutions are the advantages which the Devil aims at, that he may sear our Consciences, and seal us up in a final obduration. But there is another kind of advantage, which God and our Lord Christ and the Holy Spirit, and the Gospel, and the Ministers aim at, That advantage, which I told you of in the beginning of my Discourse. That *knowing the terror of the Lord they may perswade men.*

And now what is it that they would perswade us? that we will be contented to part with the tormenting fears of Judgment, that we will condescend not to be miserable to all Eternity: That we will accept of deliverance from the wrath to come, that we will not neglect so

great salvation, nor trample on the bloud of the everlasting Covenant. Behold! God calls upon us, *Turn you, turn you at my reproof, why will you dye, O House of Israel? As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of sinners.* Our Lord Christ calls upon us, *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will ease you. In the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, he stood and cried, Saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. The Spirit says come, and whoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.* The Gospel assures us, That *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Behold! I *set before you this day life and death, blessing and cursing,* and as an unworthy Ambassadour in Christ's stead, I *pray you be reconciled*

tiled to God, take his *yoke upon you, his yoke is easie, and his burden light*; embrace now the tender of the Gospel, only repent and believe in the Lord Jesus, accept him for your Saviour and your Lord. Your Prophet to instruct you, your King to govern you, your Priest to save you, and you shall be saved. Saved from the fears and horrours of a Guilty Conscience condemned by its own witness. Saved from the wrath of God and of the Lamb. You shall meet the Lord with Confidence. We shall be able to stand with boldness in the Judgment, to *lift up our heads with joy, because our redemption draweth near.*

This is the way to save our own souls from perishing, which is the General design of all our Preaching. And this is the way to appease the wrath which is gone out against us;

and

and to preſerve our Nation from deſtruction, which is the particular and more immediate end of our preſent Humiliation, whereof I am yet to ſpeak.

Applic. particular.

THe hand indeed of the Lord hath been heavy upon us, his wrath hath been kindled, it hath *waxed hot againſt the Sheep of his paſture*, and he hath plagued our Nation very ſore; His Judgments have been multiplied, his ſtrokes have been redoubled; and for all this *his anger is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

Wars and Peſtilences, and thoſe other fore-runners of Chriſt's coming to Judgment have been ſeen and felt amongſt us, and now when theſe have not been able to prevail,

To awaken a drowſie people, to rowſe up a Lethargic Nation, to ferment

ferment a people ſetled upon their Lees: God has made a new thing in the midſt of us, he hath wrought a work in our dayes, which makes the ears of all that hear it to tingle. A work not to be parallel'd perhaps in all the circumſtances ſince the Creation of the World.

How hath the Lord covered the Daughter of our Zion with a cloud in his anger, and hath caſt down from Heaven to Earth the beauty of Iſrael, and remembred not his footſtool in the Day of his Anger? he hath ſwallowed up the habitations of his people, he hath taken away his Tabernacles, and deſtroyed his places of Aſſemblies, the Ramparts and the Walls lament and languiſh, her Gates are ſunk to the ground, her Barrs are deſtroyed.

Who can expreſs the terror of this fatal Judgment, the unexpected eruption, the ſudden increaſe, the irreſiſtible

irresistible force, the remorsless rage, the insatiable voracity of this fiery Judgment? the present sufferings, the lasting miseries of private persons are inexpressible; the publick damage, the dangerous consequences (it may be) unconceivable.

What thing shall I liken to thee O Daughter of my People? Whereunto shall I compare the day of thy Visitation? To the destruction of *Jerusalem*? to the great and terrible day of Judgment?

O the terrors and affrightments, the shriekes and lamentations, the agonies, the confusions of that Day! They that were on the house top, durst not stay to take any thing out of their houses; nor he that was in the field return back to take his Cloaths; they that were in the City betook themselves to the Fields and Mountains, where they beheld their

their flaming habitations, where they trembled to behold the abomination of desolation raging in the holy places.

How were the wise men amazed, and the strong men terrified? despair seised them, counsel and strength fled away from them, there was no help in them, they presently gave all for lost; they stood affrighted at a distance gazing at the dreadful spectacle: in vain they thought it to contend, it looked so like the coming of the Son of Man.

The breath of the Lord kindled the fire, *he rode upon Cherub, he came flying upon the wings of the wind.* He made *the winds his Messengers*, and the *flames of fire his Ministers*: He *brought the Winds out of his Treasure*, and (to point the flame directly upon the bulk and body of the City) *through his power he brought in the*

the South-East wind: as *a thief in the night*, as *pains upon a woman in travel*, as *the lightning that cometh from the East and passeth to the West*; so came this flaming Judgment; and so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. I cannot endure to dilate upon this Argument; Sorrow and anguish are in the consideration of it: *Animus meminisse horret luctuq; refugit*. Great is the Judgment, and there is reason for us to fear that it may be portending and symptomatical.

YEt who can tell, but God may have mercy upon us, but he may yet save us from destruction? though our breach be great as the Sea, yet is not in it self irreparable; though our wounds be deep and gaping, they are not desperate or uncurable; hitherto we may say with the Apostle, We are *chastned, but*

but not killed; afflicted, but not in despair.

The signs and symptoms of an approaching final Judgment are not so decretory and peremptory that we should despair. God's signal Judgments have hitherto been accompanied with signs of mercies, and this is a plain case, that he is not fond of our destruction, and that he had rather that we should live: *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.* He stands pausing and hesitating, as he did once before, *O Ephraim, how shall I give thee up, O Ephraim?* O *England*, How shall I give thee up, O *England?*

What mean else those Alternations and those mixtures, and combinations of wonderful Judgments, and of wonderful deliverances and mercies which our ears have heard,

and

and our eyes have ſeen?

We have heard with our ears, and our Fathers have told us what wonderful deliverances he wrought in their time of old.

We have ſeen viciſſitudes great and prodigious, mixtures and combinations, marvellous in our eyes, horrible deſtructions and wonderful reſtitutions, ſucceeding one another, raging Plagues at home, and ſignal Victories abroad.

God hath filled us with bitterneſs, and covered us with aſhes: But it *is his mercy that we are not conſumed, becauſe his compaſſions fail not.* If the arm of his Juſtice and Severity hath been made bare, that it might be ſeen of all the people, He hath not left his mercy without witneſs. If his Judgment hath been great and terrible, in that which is conſumed, his Mercy is wonderful and

and miraculous in that which is preserved. Plainly! *except the Lord had left us a Remnant*, (and visibly interposed to do it,) we should not have had this place wherein to humble our selves before him. *We should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.*

It was he that in *the midst of Judgment remembred mercy*; when the flaming vengeance was in its height, when in the opinion of all men it had arrived at the state of irresistibility, and when every mans heart failed him, when the hopes of all men were sunk into despair; He checked the domineering vengeance, he put up the flaming Sword, he controul'd the streaming waves of fire, and said *thus farr shall ye come and no further.*

In a wondeful manner he preserved the Goods and Persons of

the poor Inhabitants of the City.

He reſtreined the rage of our enemies, that cryed concerning our *Jeruſalem*, *Down with it*, *Down with it*, *Aha! ſo would we have it.*

He ſuffered not a foreign Enemy to land, nor our domeſtick foes to make a head in our confuſions.

He was a wall of fire about the the perſons of our Gracious Sovereign and his Royal Highneſs, and of thoſe valiant Noble Perſons which adventured boldly and ſtrenuouſly, and indefatigably laboured the publique preſervation.

He hath given ſignal Preſervations and Victories to our Fleets abroad, he hath reſtored our High-born and Noble Generals, and our Fleet in health and ſafety.

He hath given us plenty of all things neceſſary for the life of man.

In

In one great word, to sum up an aggregation of great and various mercies, he hath upheld our Religion and our Government in peace; and for an earnest of his further preservation, he hath given us this seasonable opportunity with health and safety in this place to attend the Publique Service, to advise and assist in this arduous Juncture of affairs.

Arduous and difficult indeed it is, to restore our City and defend our Country, to restore the Houses of God, and Publique Buildings, to re-edifie ten Thousand private habitations; to sustein the poor and needy, to preserve the rights, and properties of men; to find such a temper of Justice and equity, *that there be no decay, no just complaining in our Streets.* To uphold the Traffick of the Nation, and

to keep it in order and ſecurity, free from private Robberies and publick Inſurrections; and therefore in order to all thoſe ends, to uphold our religion in the zealous and effectual exerciſe, in the ſincerity and uniformity thereof, to preſerve it from encroachments and undermining Tolerations, ruinous to Religion, deſtructive to the Government of the Nation. And all this while to make proviſion againſt our dangerous and cruel enemies, *Gebal and Ammon and Amalek*, the *French*, *Dutch*, and the *Dane*, who have conſpired to our deſtruction.

Theſe things are arduous, but not inſuperable; difficult, but not to be deſpaired of.

Concerning *Jeruſalem* burned and laid waſt by the *Aſſyrians*, *Daniel* foretold, that the *ſtreets and the*

the walls thereof ſhould be rebuilded even in troubleous times; and when the time came that they were re-edified, we read in *Nehemiah*, that the labourers in one hand held the trowel, and the other held a weapon; one half of the people laboured in the work, and the other half held the Spears and the Shields, the Bows and the Habergeons, becauſe of their cruel enemies on every ſide.

If God ſhall be pleaſed to give us a ſpirit of Underſtanding, and *teach our Senators Wiſdom*; If he ſhall pour out a publick ſpirit upon our Councils, a ſpirit of tenderneſs and compaſſion, of Juſtice and Equity, Temperance and Frugality, Fortitude and Magnanimity; If all Orders and Degrees amongſt us, Civil, and Military, and Eccleſiaſtical ſhall

take to themſelves the ſpirits of Chriſtians and of men.

If our Counſels and endeavours ſhall be anſwerable to the care and benignity, to the fervour and ſtrenuous induſtry of our gracious Sovereign, and to the alacrity and magnanimity of our couragious and generous Countrymen; then (ſpeaking humanely, and abſtracting from our Deſervings) we need not greatly fear, but we may yet ſubdue the pride and inſolence of our barbarous Enemies; we may yet behold our City riſing out of its aſhes in greater ſplendour than we have ſeen it heretofore.

Wherefore ariſe, and gird your ſelves O ye Princes, ye Nobles, ye Rulers of our *Iſrael*! Conſult, Conſider, and give ſentence. *Men, Brethren, and Fathers,*

thers, let us ariſe and labour; let us up and be doing, *be ſtrong and of good courage*; and the good hand of our God ſhall be upon you; he ſhall give you the honour to be the defenders of your Country, he ſhall make you *repairers of the breaches, reſtorers of our City to dwell in.*

Yet I cannot, I may not forbear to put you in remembrance of this one thing; *Except the Lord build the City, their labour is but laſt that build it.* It is not our wiſdom or induſtry, much leſs our confidence, that will do it; unleſs God be for us, neither will God be for us, unleſs we turn from the evil of our ways: except we repent, we have reaſon to fear, that what we have ſeen hitherto, will be no more but the beginning of our

ſorrows. The Prophet *Eſay* tells us, *That the Lord ſent a word unto Jacob, and it lighted on Iſrael; and all the people ſhall know that ſay in the pride and ſtoutneſs of their hearts, the Bricks are fallen, but we will build with hewn Stones; the Sycamores are down, but we will change them into Cedars. Therefore the Lord will ſet up their adverſaries, and joyn their Enemies together, the Syrians before, and the Philiſtims behind, and they ſhall devour Iſrael with open mouth; Becauſe this people turneth not to him that ſmiteth them.*

Wherefore turn you, turn you every one from the evil of his ways. Let us ſearch our hearts, and try our ways, and turn to him that hath ſmitten us. *Turn unto him with all our hearts, with faſting and with weeping, and mourning; he*

hath

hath smitten us, and he will heal us, because his compassions fail not. Come and let us reason together, saith God, though your sins were as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.

There is yet a way open to take away the terror of our Particular Judgment, and to prevent a final Judgment from falling upon the Nation. We are yet in the Land of hope, and space is given for Repentance, the door of mercy is not yet shut upon us, nor the ears of our Judge sealed against us.

O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his Goodness, and declare the wonders that he hath done for the children of men! that hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our Iniquities; that hath not cut us off in the midst of our sins, nor in the height of our impenitencies snatched

ſnatched us away to Judgment; that hath not dealt with us as with the Apoſtate Angels, and with Thouſands of our Brethren, who were better and more righteous than we.

Let us once more then return into our ſelves. Let us conſider our condition, let us veiw over and ballance the grounds of our hopes, and the reaſons of our fears: Let us take an exact account of our whole eſtate and intereſt in reference to all our concernments, National and Perſonal, Temporal and Eternal: Let us deliberate and adviſe what is to be done, and what is to be avoided.

Did I ſay deliberate? Whether we ſhall ſave our ſouls from utter darkneſs and everlaſting burnings?

burnings? Whether we shall save the Nation from final ruine and desolation? —— Nay rather,

Let us break off our sins by repentance, and our Iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor.

Let us make our selves *friends of the Mammon of unrighteousness, that when we fail, we may be received into everlasting habitations.*

Let us *lend unto the Lord*, that we may have *treasure in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal.*

Let us fast *the fast that the Lord hath chosen; Loose the bands of wickedness, feed the hungry, cloath the naked; he that hath two Coats, let him give to him that hath none; and he that hath*

meat

meat let him do likewiſe.

Such an occaſion ſcarce happens in many hundreds of years; and for motives to charity, they are all compriſed in that great argument of the Judgment to come.

When the Son of Man ſhall come to Judgment, and ſhall *ſit upon the Throne of his Glory*: When *all Nations ſhall be gathered before him*, and he *ſhall ſet the Sheep on his right hand, and the Goats on his left*: This ſhall be the mark of their diſcrimination,

He ſhall *ſay to thoſe on his right hand, I was hungry, and ye fed me; thirſty, and ye gave me drink; naked, and ye cloathed me; ſick and in priſon, and ye viſited me; Come ye bleſſed of my Father, receive the Kingdom prepared for you.*

And

And he *shall say unto them on the left hand, I was hungry, and ye fed me not; thirsty, and ye gave me no drink*, &c. Wherefore *go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.*

The way is short and compendious to save all our interests. *What doth the Lord require of us but to do justly, to love mercy, to walk humbly before the Lord our God? Let us be merciful therefore as our heavenly Father is merciful*, and *let us humble our selves under the Almighty hand of God*, as we pretend to do this day. Let us betake our selves afore-hand to our Judge, and pour out our complaints before him. *Let us confess our wickedness, and be sorry for our sins.* Let us lay hold on the feet of our

Blessed

Bleſſed Redeemer, and give him no reſt till he hath ſealed our pardon. Let us bathe with our tears the wounds that we have made. Let us cry mightily to the Throne of Grace. Let us wreſtle and ſtrive with our Redeemer, and not let *him go until he bleſs us*: Until he open our eyes to ſee the dangers we are in, and through his mercy ſhew us a way to eſcape them. Till he quicken us up to reſolutions of amendment, and carry us ſtrongly through theſe reſolutions. Until he heal our backſlidings, and make up our breaches: Until he ſave our ſouls from death, and our Nation from deſtruction.

To work our ſelves to theſe Reſolutions, and to fix us in them, to make them abide upon us all our days, let us remember

ber what hath been ſpoken, and let us frequently meditate upon that Sarcaſtical Conceſſion of the Text,

Rejoyce O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the days of thy youth; Walk in the ways of thy heart, and the ſight of thy eyes; But know, that for all theſe things God will bring thee to Judgment.

FINIS.

A

SERMON,

CONCERNING

The Strangeneſs, Frequency, and Deſperate Conſequence

OF

Impenitency:

Preached at

WHITE-HALL,

April 1. 1666.

(Soon after the great Plague)

BY

SETH then Lord Biſhop of *EXON.*

LONDON:

Printed by *E. T.* and *R. H.* for *James Collins,* at the Kings-Arms within *Ludgate,* near St. *Pauls,* 1672.

UMI

A SERMON,

Containing

The Strangeneſs, Frequency, and Deſperate Conſequence

OF

IMPENITENCY.

Revel. 9.20.

And the reſt of the men, which were not killed by the plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands.

ALthough I am not without apprehenſion, that the frequencie of penitential diſcourſes, and the ſeeming eaſineſs of repentance may indiſpoſe

ſome perſons for ſuch an attention as is neceſſary both to ſpeaker and hearers, for a due performance of the Offices, which we are about; yet I ſhall not ſpend time in making Apologies for the Argument, which I have choſen.

Among all the aggravations of our ſins, there is none more heinous, than the frequent hearing of our duty: Among all the errors of our lives, there is none more fatal, than that concerning the eaſineſs of the duty of Repentance.

To diſcover the fallacy, and to prevent the dangerous conſequences of this imagination, I have choſen at this time to treat of this inſtructive inſtance of the Text.

If

If Repentance were so easie as is imagined, why did not these men repent, that are mentioned in the words, which I have read?

They had not only the Dictates of Nature, and the advantage of the Scriptures to move them to it; they had the Ministry of Angels to perswade them; they had Thunders and Trumpets to awaken them, and rouze them up: they had signs and wonders in the heaven above, and in the earth below: they had providential instances of prodigious judgements, and wonderful mercies.

They were spectators of grievous Plagues brought upon their neighbours; they were Monuments of singular mercies and

deliverances a long time continued to themſelves.

When thouſands fell beſide them, they were a remnant kept alive; when others were deſtroyed, they were preſerved; for experiment, to try whether yet they would repent.

I ſay the perſons in the Text were οἱ λοιποὶ, *the reſt* of the men that were not killed by thoſe Plagues: *And the reſt of the men that were not killed, yet repented not of the works of their hands.*

My endeavours at this time will be, by ſhewing the danger and fatal conſequences of impenitence, to move my ſelf and others to repent. And to determine preciſely who theſe perſons were, of what Nation, of what Church, of what condition,

tion, in what time they lived, what were the Plagues brought upon them, when and how they were executed, and such other particulars, I am no way obliged by the design which I have propounded.

About these particulars Expositors extremely differ; in this they all agree, that they had the advantage of the Scriptures to bring them to repentance.

Whatever is the exact, either liberal, or mystical meaning of this vision of the seven Angels, and the seven Trumpets; and of that lofty tragical Scheme, wherein it is represented, thus much is evident, that notwithstanding all Gods dealings with men to bring them to repentance, they will sometimes continue in im-

penitence, and that this is an horrible provocation.

The words which I have chosen contain the sad result of the labours of six Angels, the warning of six Trumpets, the operation of six Plagues, and six Deliverances.

And they are the common node, or term, connecting the Antecedent parts of the vision (beginning at the 8*th*. Chapter) with the Catastrophe thereof (delivered in the 10*th*.)

They are to be considered two ways.

1. Ab-

b Absolutely, where we have
1 Matter, containing the character of their persons described by
1 Gods dealing with them: not killed; remnant of others killed; killed by grievous plagues.
2 Their dealings with God: repented not; not of the works of their hands; worship of Devils, Idols, (first Table:) Sorceries, Murthers, Fornications, Thefts, (second Table.)
2 Form and manner: in the form of an *Epiphonema*, expres'd by the particle, *yet*, repetible upon every part of their character, (not killed, yet repented not; yet repented not of the works of their hands.)
Yet is *vox* { *Admirantis*, / *Accingentis ad vindictam*; }
It first implies the strangeness of the case, and secondly, the desperateness of the provocation: for the words are to be considered not only absolutely; but also
2 Relatively; as they look backward and forward; and are the connexion of the Antecedent parts of the Vision with the Catastrophe. Six Angels sounded six Trumpets, and executed six Judgements; yet they repented not— *They repented not, and the seventh Angel sounded and swore, that time* (i.e. Time of repentance, & respite of vengeance) *should be no longer.*

The

The words thus reſolved would afford many conſiderable obſervations; I ſhall take up three that lye uppermoſt.

1. From the form and manner of the words (as they are an *Epiphonema* expreſſing a kind of wonder, and admiration) I ſhall obſerve the ſtrangeneſs of the impenitency, of ſuch men as theſe, conſidered in common reaſon.

2. From the matter of them, I ſhall obſerve the frequencie of ſuch impenitencie in common experience.

3. From the relative conſideration of the words (as they connect the Cataſtrophe of the Viſion with the Antecedent parts of it) I ſhall obſerve the lamentable conſequence of this impenitency: And

4. Con-

4. Conclude with a few words of Application.

1. First then to bring to our apprehenſion the ſtrangeneſs of impenitencie of ſuch men as theſe (conſidered *in Theſi*, and in Theory) it will be needful only to reflect upon the cauſes of admiration, and to lay before you ſome of their advantages, and Motives to Repentance.

Things wonderful in their nature are thoſe, whoſe cauſes are unſearchable; things ſtrange and admirable to common reaſon are ſuch as happen contrary to the Laws of Nature, and of Reaſon.

From the former cauſe the motion of the heavens is wonderful; from the latter it was prodigious and admirable, that *the ſun ſtood ſtill in Gibeon, and the moon*

moon in the valley of Ajalon.

That God should take advantage upon the lapsed Angels, that upon their offence he should bind them up in chains, that he should exclude them from the benefit of Repentance, and reserve them to the Judgement of the Great Day.

That he should allow this priviledge to lapsed men; that he should reveal himself to them; that he should make them understand their duty, and their interest; that he should set before them good and evil, happiness and misery, the desire and the detestation of humane nature; that he should by all means court and wooe them to that which all men naturally desire; and discourage, and divert them from that which they naturally abhorr:

horr: That after all this he ſhould not prevail in ſuch a caſe as this; that they ſhould ſcornfully reject the end of all their hopes; that they ſhould ſtudiouſly purſue the object of all their fears; This is that rational wonder that I am now to lay before you.

To manifeſt this wonder a little more explicitely, let us conſider the advantages of Nature, and the Motives from Scripture to bring men to repentance.

The grounds and fundamental elements of the Doctrine of Repentance are theſe: The Being & Attributes of God; The immortality of the Souls of men; The principles of *Syntereſis*; The terrours of natural Conſcience; The forecaſts of vengeance; The apprehenſion and deſire of an

an Attonement: And all these are manifest from the Dictates and discoveries of the Light of Nature.

The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work: They speak it loud, they spread it largely,
Psal. 19 they proclaim it constantly, *Their sound is gone out into all the world ---there is no speech, or language, but their voice is heard among them.*

Rom. 1. 20. *The invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen;--- even his eternal power and God-head.*

Concerning his providence in governing the world, St. *Paul* tells the men of *Lystra*, and the
Act. 14. 17. Priest of *Jupiter*, that *he did not leave himself without witness* amongst the Heathen.

The

The whole earth is full of his righteouſneſs, and all the people ſee his glory: So that a man ſhall ſay, Verily there is a reward for the righteous, doubtleſs there is a God, that judgeth the earth. Pſal. 97. 6.

He is not far from any one of us; in whom we live and move, and have our being. Act. 17. 28.

He is *the Father of Spirits*, Heb. 12. 9. and *we are his off-ſpring*. Surely Act. 17. 28. *there is a ſpirit within a man*, and Job 32. 8. that ſpirit immortal, deriving from Him, *who only hath immortality*. 1 Tim. 6. 16.

And theſe things have aſſerted themſelves with ſo great evidence, that they have been generally acknowledged by all ſorts of heathen Authors, Philoſophers, Hiſtorians, Orators and Poets.

Moreover, *they ſhew the Law* Rom. 2. 15. (of

(of *Syntereſis*) *written in their hearts*; they have *conſciences accuſing, or excuſing*; they find themſelves *concluded under ſin*, and are perplexed and tormented under the apprehenſions of an offended God.

For Conſcience condemned by its own witneſs is very timorous, and always fore-caſteth grievous things.

The ſtarting of *Alexander*, when he had killed his friend; and of *Nero*, when he had deſtroyed his mother: The confuſions of *Tiberius*, when he wrote from *Capreæ* to the Senate concerning the death of *Sejanus*: The foretaſtes of an avenging *Nemeſis* deſcribed by heathen Orators, and Hiſtorians: The paſſions aſcribed to *Medea*, and *Hercules*, and *Oreſtes*, &c. by the Poets: The

Tacit.

rites

Rites and Sacrifices of all the Pagan world: The prodigious ways of expiations deviſed to make their attonement with their imaginary Deities offended: They were all of them the products of natural Conſcience, exerting itſelf in ſuch a diſquiſition, as is delivered by the Prophet; *Wherewithal ſhall I come before the Lord, or bow my ſelf before the high God? ſhall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands* Mic. 6. 6, *of rams, or ten thouſand rivers of oyl? ſhall I give my firſtborn for my tranſgreſſion? the fruit of my body for the ſin of my ſoul?*

All theſe, and many more are the Indications of Nature, the incitements and provocations of

natural Conscience to bring men to repentance.

But beside these common Motives, the persons of the Text (whether they were the Jews, and Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* at the time of the destruction of it by *Titus* and *Vespasian*, or any that called themselves Christians) they had a clearer, and more glorious light to guide them; they had far more efficacious, and noble Motives to lead and urge them to repentance, the Light and Motives of the Holy Scriptures.

* Grot. Dr. Ham.

There it is, that the Power, and Wisdom, and Goodness, and Severity of God are gloriously displayed; the immortal Nature, and sinful condition of the souls of men; the rewards and punishments of this life, and

of

of the world to come are clearly discovered.

The elements of the Doctrine of Repentance, the Motives to it are there explained and applyed, mixt and combined a 1000 several ways.

The Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament, are nothing else but a Systeme of various powerful Methods to bring men to repentance.

This is the general aim, and common scope of all the Doctrines, the Histories, the Logick, and Rhetorick of the Book of God.

This was *Noah*'s Text upon which he preached to the old world 120 years: Upon this errand God sent all the Prophets, *rising early, and sending them*; they said, *Turn again now every*

1 Pet 3. 20.

Jer. 7. 25.

one from his evil way.

This was the message of him that was *the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.* Our Lord Christ, and his seventy Disciples, and his twelve Apostles, they all with one voice insisted upon this Theme; and when the Holy Ghost himself descended, he likewise drove at this conclusion; *Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.*

Matth. 3. 2.

Marc. 6. 12.

Act. 3. 19.

The time would fail me, if I should attempt in any measure to lay before you the declarations, promises, threatnings, exhortations, dehortations, reasonings, expostulations, instances of mercies, and of judgements delivered in

in the Scriptures to bring men to repentance.

To this end God hath declared himself, *slow to anger, gracious and merciful*; He hath said, that *he would have no man perish*; He hath *sworn* that *he doth not desire the death of the wicked*, but *had rather that he should turn and live.* Psal. 145. 8. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Ezek. 33. 11.

He *considers our frame, and his ways are equal:* He *is ready to pardon*; to *pardon iniquity, transgression and sin*; *though they are as scarlet, to make them white as snow*; if they be a cloud, to *scatter them like a cloud. Wherefore let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous his imaginations, and return unto the Lord.* Psal. 103. 14. Ezek. 33. 17. Isai. 1. 18. Isai. 44. 22. Isai. 55. 7.

On the other side, to break the hardness of the hearts of men,

to rouze them up from their impenitency, he declares his juſtice, and aſſerts his propriety in
Rom. 12. 19. vengeance; *Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it.* He proteſts,
Nah. 1.3. Hab. 1.13. that he will *by no means acquit the guilty*; that he is *of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity*; that
Pſal. 68. 21. *he will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of ſuch an one as goes on ſtill in his wickedneſs.*

Pſal. 7.10. If a man *will not turn, he will whet his ſword, and bend his bow.*

If a Nation will not repent,
Ezek. 6. 11. then *ſmite with thy hand, & ſtamp with thy foot, and ſay, alas!* for *it ſhall fall by the ſword, by the famine, and by the peſtilence.*

Now the general inference of all theſe is ſtill the ſame; this is ſtill the Logick of the Scriptures;

Scriptures: *Our God ſhall come, and ſhall not keep ſilence--- wherefore conſider this ye that forget God. We muſt all appear before the judgement ſeat of Chriſt-- Knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord we perſwade.* Pſal. 50. 3. Pſal. 50. 22. Rom. 14. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 11.

To this end we find the Lord ſometimes diſputing logically to convince, and ſometimes with divine and noble Oratory endeavouring to perſwade; ſometimes by ſignal inſtances of pardoning mercies, and of avenging judgements to induce men to repentance.

He ſpeaks to their reaſon, to their affections, to their very ſenſes, πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως.

Come now, and let us reaſon together, ſaith the Lord, if ye be willing, and obedient, ye ſhall eat the good of the land; if ye rebel, Iſa. 1. 18.

Ezek. 18. 29. *ye shall be devoured. Are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?* Again,

He expostulates with them sometimes upon the principles of ingenuity: Jer. 2. 5. *Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone away from me? O my people, what have I done unto thee? wherein* Mic. 6. 3. *have I wearyed thee? Testifie against me, O Israel; what doth the Lord thy God require of thee?*

Sometimes he expostulates upon the point of interest; Jer. 4. 14. *How long shall vain thoughts lodge in your hearts? How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity?* Prov. 1. 22. Jer. 5. 31. *what will ye do in the end thereof?*

Again, he sets before us a multitude of glorious instances to shew that never any penitent was rejected,

rejected, however heinous, however numerous were their sins. The prodigal *devoured his substance with harlots*: Mary Magdalen *had seven Devils*: *Peter* denyed his Master *with* horrid *oaths, and imprecations*: *Saul was exceedingly mad against him*; yet upon their repentance were accepted. Act. 26. 11.

He had delivered *Israel* seven times, and they *forsook him*; and he said, *he would deliver them no more*; but they repented, *and his soul was* straight-way *grieved*, and he delivered them. Jud. 10. 10, &c.

Instead of many, consider that one instance of *Manasses*, the evil son of good King *Hezekiah*: *He set up altars for Baalim, and worshipp'd all the host of heaven*: *Altars in the court of the temple*; *an idol in the very temple*; *he* 2 Chron. 33.

caused

caused his sons to pass through the fire; he observed times, used inchantments, dealt with familiar spirits, and with wizards; made Judah, and Jerusalem to do worse than the heathen. And the Lord spake to him, and he would not hear. After all this, *in his afflictions he humbled himself, and then God was intreated, and heard his supplication.*

Isa. 55.8. *His ways are not as our ways;* He forgave *Nineveh*, and *Jonah* was displeased exceedingly; he taxes him with easiness in relenting, he charges him as if he had an ancient known infirmity of flexibility to his veracity, and the honour of his Prophets: *Lord* Jon. 4.2. (saith he) *was not this my saying? and therefore I prevented it to flee to Tarshish; for I knew that thou art merciful; --- therefore take, I beseech*

beſeech thee, my life from me.

His thoughts are not as our thoughts: when *Nathan* had told *David* a ſtory of a poor man, who had his ewe Lamb raviſhed from him, then *David was exceeding wroth, and he ſwore, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing ſhall ſurely dye:* But when *David*, who had taken *Bathſheba*, and murthered *Uriah*, ſaid, *I have ſinned*; *Nathan* ſaid unto *David*, *The Lord hath put away thy ſin, thou ſhalt not dye.* 2 Sam. 12.

On the other ſide, we have inſtances of horrible judgements for Impenitency; whereof I ſhall after take occaſion to ſpeak.

Now conſidering all theſe things, is it not ſtrange, that men ſhould not repent? That no conſideration of ingenuity, or of in-

intereſt ſhould move them to it? That neither the Law written in their hearts, nor that which was delivered by the mediation of Angels, nor the Goſpel given us by the Son of God ſhould bring them to it? That neither reaſon, nor experience; neither mercies nor judgements; neither the ſweetneſs of a good conſcience, nor the torments of a bad; the beauties of vertue, nor the deformity of ſin; the ſhortneſs of life, nor length of eternity; the lightneſs of things preſent, nor the *exceeding weight* of thoſe which are to come? That neither Death nor Life, nor Angels, nor Trumpets; *nor things preſent, nor thing to come; nor height nor depth, nor any other thing ſhould be able to ſeparate men from the love of* ſin?

Is

Is it not ſtrange? The Apoſtles, the Prophets were aſtoniſhed at this; nay, God himſelf ſeems to be affected with wonder: *Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! Be aſtoniſhed, O ye heavens, and be horribly afraid; they have forſaken me.* Iſai. 1. 2. Jer. 2. 12.

This is that wonder conſidered in it ſelf according to common reaſon, the object of our firſt obſervation, drawn from the form and manner of the words by way of *Epiphonema*, expreſſed by the particle *yet*; *yet they repented not.*

II. The ſecond Obſervation was taken from the matter of the words: However ſuch impenitency is very ſtrange to common reaſon (conſidered in the Theory) yet it is too frequent in practice, and in common experience:

ence: *The rest of the men repented not.*

This is that grand contradiction, that fatal paradox of the life of man: His very being consists in rationality; his acting is contrary to all the reason in the world: Man only was created under the Law of Reason; man only maintains a constant opposition to the law and reason of his creation.

Psal. 104. 19. *He appointed the moon for certain seasons, and the sun knoweth his going down.* The blustring winds, the raging storms, the unruly Ocean; the Lyon, the Tiger, and the Bear, these all pursue the law of their creation, these all are *obedient unto his word*; charmed to it by that powerful voice, whereby they were created.

Psal. 148. 8.

Man

Man only ſtops his ears, and refuſes *to hear the voice of this Almighty charmer; charm he never ſo wiſely,* ſo loudly, or ſo variouſly.

The general ways and methods of his charming have been already mentioned; I am now to lay before you the general ſucceſs of thoſe methods: The ſucceſs

1. Of his word, and his meſſengers.

2. Of his works of { 1. Mercy, 2. Judgement, } { Single, Intermixed.

1. For the ſucceſs (or rather the unſucceſsfulneſs) of his word, for the entertainment (or rather the barbarous uſage) of his meſſengers; how often do we find God, and his Prophets, Chriſt and his Apoſtles complaining and

and, as it were, fretting themselves with indignation?

As for the word, sometimes they will not hear it. More than seven times *Jeremy* complains almost in the very same words:

Jer. 7. 21. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, unto the day that your fathers came forth of the land of Egypt until this day, I have sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily, rising early and sending them; yet they hearkned not to me, nor inclined their ear.*

Matth. 11. 17. *Whereunto shall I liken this generation? I have piped—*

Sometimes they hear it as a

Ezek. 33. 12. song: *Lo thou art unto them as a very lovely song.*

Sometimes they refuse it positively: *They say to the Seers, see not; and to the Prophets, prophesie not unto us the thing of the*

the

the Lord, which thou haſt ſpoken in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee.

They endeavour to ſuppreſs, and to deſtroy it. When *Jehudi* had read three or four leaves in *Jeremies* roll, *he cut it with a pen-knife, and caſt it into the fire, until all the roll was conſumed in the fire.* Jer. 36. 20.

Inſtead of faith and obedience, it meets with infidelity, and atheiſtical oppoſition, and contradiction: *Who hath believed our report?* ſaith one; *All the day long have I ſtretch'd forth my hands to a gain-ſaying people*, is the complaint of another. Eſa. 53. 1. Eſa. 65. 2.

They ſay unto God, depart from us; for we deſire not the knowledge of his ways. Speak to them in the name of Lord, they ſay, *Who is the Lord, that I ſhould* Job 21. 14. Exod. 5. 2.

fear him? discourse to them of
Job 21.15. the Almighty; they say, *What is the Almighty, that we should serve him*? What can the Almighty do? *What profit shall we have if we pray unto him*?

Speak to them of God's searching Eye; *Surely*, say they, *God*
Ps.10.11,13 *sees it not*; *Tush*, *God cares not for it*; of his over-ruling Providence; nay, say they, but *all*
Eccl 9.2,3 *things come alike to all*; *there is one event to the just, and to the unjust*.

Tell them they must appear before the Judgment-seat of God, and of Christ; they scoffingly reply, *Where is the Promise of his coming*? *since the Fa-*
2 Pet 3.4. *thers fell asleep, all things con-*
Mal.2.17. *tinue as they were before. Where*
Isa.5.29. *is the God of Judgment*? *let him make speed, and hasten his work*,

that

that we may see it. This is the general entertainment of their message; and for the persons of the Messengers, they *devise devices against them*; they *smite them with* the smiting of *the tongue*; they threaten them, they beat them sometime, they take away their Liberty, and sometime their Lives; this was the portion of *Jeremiah*; *the men of* Anathoth *sought his life, saying, Prophesy not by the Name of the Lord, that thou die not by our hand. They charged him falsly, they smote him, they imprisoned him in the house of* Jonathan; *they cast him into the dungeon of* Malchiah; *they let him down with cords into the mire.* Jer. 18. 18. Jer. 11. 21. Jer. 3. 13. 38. 6, 9.

What do I instance in one particular; since at once we read the general entertainment of the

Prophets, that were of old? That *they had trial of cruel mockings, and scourgings; yea moreover of bands and imprisonment; they were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with*
Heb.11.37. *the sword; they wandred about in sheep-skins and goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.*

Moreover they scourged and crucified *the Lord of Glory*; they put *him to an open shame*. Neither were the *disciples above their master*, or the *servants above their Lord*; after scourgings, and bands, and imprisonments, and many a sad and barbarous usage, St. *James* was knocked on the head, S. *Peter* was crucified, S. *Paul* was beheaded, and the rest were used accordingly.

Mat.23.33. *Behold* (saith God) *I send unto*

to you Prophets, and wise men, and some of them ye shall scourge in your Synagogues, and some of them ye shall kill and crucifie.

If we diligently search the Scriptures, and histories of the Church, we shall find this to have been generally the success of the Word of God, and of his Messengers; instead of trembling, and penitence, and reformation, to be entertained with scorn, and contempt, and persecution.

2. But it may be the Works of God may have better success upon the hearts of the children of men; his works of 1. Mercy, or of 2. Judgment. The Apostle tells us, that *God's patience and forbearance leadeth men unto repentance*; Rom. 2. 4. And the Prophet, that *when his judgments are abroad, the inhabitants of the* Isa. 26. 9.

World will learn righteousness.

Indeed a Logical man, reasoning upon Principles, will be apt so to conclude: But alas! it is not so with men; that by that so clear reasoning should be contradicted by evident experience and observation!

Nay they *despise the riches of*
Ro.2.4,5. *God's mercy, and treasure up wrath against the day of wrath.*

From the patience, and longanimity of God they make perverse, and Atheistical conclusi-
Ps.50.21. ons; *when thou sawest a thief thou consentedst unto him, and hast been partaker with the adulterer; ---these things hast thou done and I kept silence, and thou thoughtest wickedly that I am such an one as thy self.*

Eccl.8.11. *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily,*

there-

therefore the heart of the Sons of men are fully set in them to do evil.

Solomon tells us, that *the prosperity of Fools shall destroy them*; and there are few so circumspect and wise, as not to stumble at this stone of stumbling. Neither *Salomon*'s Wisdom, nor his Father's Piety could preserve them upright amidst the snares of prosperity. The danger as well as wickedness of this is intimated in *Nathan*'s exprobration to *David*: *Thus saith the Lord the God of Israel, I anointed thee King over Israel; I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, I gave thee thy Masters house, and thy Masters wives into thy bosom; I gave thee the house of Israel, & of Judah, wherefore hast thou killed* Uriah, *and taken his wife to be thy wife?* Prov. 1. 36. 2 Sam. 12.

This was a temptation, which the Israelites never could withstand, notwithstanding all the Caveats given them by Moses:

Deut. 6. 12 *When the Lord shall bring thee into the good land, and shall give thee cities and houses, which thou buildedst not, Vineyards, and Olive trees which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten, and be full; Then beware lest thou forget the Lord thy God.*

Deu. 32. 15 But *Jesurun waxed fat and kicked*; as the Lord multiplied his mercies, so they multiplied their transgressions: his prodigious and wonderful deliverances were answered with prodigious and wonderful ingratitude; for

Deu. 32. 15 *they sinned yet the more and lightly esteemed the God of their Salvation.*

But if the mercies of God will

not

not prevail to draw men to repentance, surely his judgments cannot fail to drive them to it; whether they are sent upon a city, or upon a man only: *Shall the Lion roar, and shall not the forest tremble? shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid?* Amos 3. 6.

Behold therefore and tremble, and be afraid all ye that look upon Repentance as a slight and an easie duty; and that defer it for that reason: It is not every horrour and shaking, that will bring a man to Repentance. And the instances are many, wherein the judgments of God, instead of softning, or breaking the hearts of men, have hardened them yet more in a course of desperate Impenitency.

Felix trembled, and said, *Go thy way*---. When

When *Belshazzar* had plundered the house of God, and was making a debauch in the bowls of the Temple, the finger wrote upon the wall *MENE*.... We read that *his countenance was changed, and an horrible trembling seized upon him: The joynts of his loyns were loosed, his knees smote one against another*; But we do not read that he repented. Dan. 5. 6.

As plagues were multiplyed, so *Pharaoh's* heart was hardned, and he vowed *he would not let the people go.*

When the King of *Moab* was in anguish, and in great distress, it was a warning to repent; but *he took his eldest son, and offered him for a sacrifice upon the wall.* 2 King. 3. 26.

When the Philistines made war upon *Saul*, and God was de-

departed; when he *was sore afraid*, and *his heart greatly trembled*; who would not expect, that he should have turned unto the Lord? But he betook him to *the witch of Endor*. 1 Sam. 28.

Of *Ahaz* it is said, that *in the time of his afflictions he trespassed yet more* (*this is that King Ahaz.*) 2 Chron. 28. 22.

And we read, that when a great hail fell from heaven, *Men blasphemed God because of the hail.* Apoc. 16. 21.

But if single mercies and judgments will not do, perhaps an intermixture of them may prevail; and indeed for a rational and probable means to bring men to repentance, the imagination and apprehension of man can go no higher than to such a case, where signal and remarkable

ble judgements are brought upon some; and others are reserved, and set, as it were, upon a Scaffold, or a Theatre, in safety to behold the destruction and plagues brought upon their Neighbours.

Turbantur aquora ventis
E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem.

So *Israel* beheld the Egyptians
Numb. 16. drowned in the Sea; and *Corah* and his complices swallowed in the Land.

This is the case of those whom God preserves from plagues and famines, and desolations making them survivors and spectators of the destructions brought upon the world. And this was the case of the persons in the Text; this one

one would think should never fail.

When he slew them, then they, (i. e. the remnant*) sought him,* Psal. 78. *and turned them early, and sought after God.* Nay! but even this hath also too often failed; for even these did but *flatter him with their lips, and dissemble.* The Israelites, that were spectators of the drowned Egyptians, within three days fell to their wonted murmurings. The Spectators of *Corah* within one day returned to their rebellion. The Prophet *Amos* in the name of God complains of those that had escaped famine, and pestilence, and sword: *I have overthrown some* Amos 4. 6. *of you as God overthrew Sodom, and Gomorrha; and ye were as a fire-brand snatched out of the burning; yet have ye not turned un-*

to

to me, saith the Lord. And this was the case of the persons in the Text; a very little remnant of men, which were not killed by the plagues brought upon others, *yet they repented not.*

Notwithstanding the wonder according to reason, we have seen the truth, and observed the frequency of such mens impenitency in common experience; it remains that we consider the consequence and issue of it, observable from the Text, as it stands in relation to the Antecedent parts, and the Catastrophe of this Vision: *They repented not.—And the seventh Angel sware, that there should be time no more* (no more time for repentance, no longer reprieve of vengeance.)

III. Such an obstinate impenitency is the great provocation of

of the wrath of God; such a final impenitency is the certain forerunner of final ruine, and destruction.

Though the Lord be patient, he is not of wood, or of stone; though he be slow to anger, yet he can be angry; and *who can stand before him, when he is angry?* Psa. 76. 7.

It is true, that *the Lord is strong, and patient*, and our *God is provoked every day*; he is *long-suffering*, and *abundant in forbearance*; though we *do evil an hundred times*, he *prolongs our days*. Psal. 7. 12. Eccles. 8. 12.

He is not extreme to mark what is done amiss: He considers that we are but dust; and as a wind that passeth away, and cometh not again. Psal. 130. 3. Psal. 103. 14.

Many, and many a provocation

Lam. 3. on he paſſes by; for, *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.*

Behold, *he ſtands at the door and knocks*; By his word, and by his works, and by his ſpirit ſtriving to reclaim the ſons of men; that he may keep their life from the pit, and their ſoul from periſhing.

But if all this cannot prevail, what can reaſonable men expect? or what would they have him do?

His *Spirit ſhall not alway ſtrive with men*; his abuſed lenity, and his affronted longanimity will be turned into jealouſie, and fiery indignation. For *to him belongeth vengeance* as well as mercie; Pſal. 94. 1. and *the God* to whom *vengeance, the God to whom vengeance belongeth will ſhew himſelf.*

God

God will *arise*, *and his enemies shall be scattered. He will awake as one out of sleep, he will rouze himself up as a Gyant refreshed with wine. He will smite his enemies in the hinder parts, and put them to a perpetual shame. Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the mighty one of Israel; Ah! I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.* Psal. 68. 1. Psal. 78. 65. Isai. 1. 24.

Concerning persons the Apostle tells us of a certain state, wherein *there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgement.* Heb. 10. 26.

Concerning Nations our Saviour tells of a certain measure of iniquity; *Fill ye up the measure of your fathers*; so false is that conceit, so dangerous is that imagination, that men can repent Matth. 23. 32.

at any time (at leaſtwiſe, whenſoever they ſhall have a mind to it) *They ſhall call* (ſaith God) *but I will not anſwer, they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me.*

Prov. 1. 28.

Ezek. 20. 31. *As I live (ſaith the Lord) I will not be enquired of by you.* *Saul* enquired of *the Lord*, he *anſwered him not, neither by prophets, nor by Urim, nor by dreams.*

Heb. 12. 17. *Eſau* ſought for repentance, but he *found no place for repentance, though he ſought it even with tears.*

Apoc. 2. 21. *I gave her ſpace to repent, but ſhe repented not; behold I will caſt her into great tribulations.*

This is a caſe, which I tremble to inſiſt upon: What tongue can expreſs the miſery of ſuch a perſon, or ſuch a people? How dreadful is this place! ſurely this is none other, than the gate of

of Hell; the entrance of all the miseries of this world, and of the world to come: 1. Temporal, 2. Spiritual, and 3. Eternal.

1. *The Lord shall send upon them cursing, and vexation, and rebuke, until they be destroyed, and perish quickly.* They shall be cursed in all their interests and concernments, in their estates, in their credit, in their relations, in their persons: *Cursed shall they be in the city, and cursed in the field; cursed in the basket, and in the store.* They shall *become an astonishment, and a proverb, and a by-word, and a reproach among all their neighbours round about. Cursed shall they be in the wife of their bosom, and cursed in the fruit of their body. The Lord shall smite them with a consumption, and with a feaver, with an inflam-* Deut. 28. 20.

mation, and with an extreme burning. He shall smite them with the botch of Egypt, and with the Emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch (with a botch that cannot be healed, from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head.)

Their carcase shall be meat for the fowls of the air, and for the beasts of the earth, and no man shall fray them away.

2. Moreover, he shall pour out spiritual judgements upon them; he shall give them over to the wickedness of their hearts; he shall let them alone, that they may commit sin with greediness.

He shall send upon them a spirit of blindness, and hardness of heart, a spirit of slumber and carnal security.

Then

Then, when they have filled up the measure of their enormities, he shall *smite them with madness and astonishment*, with terrours of conscience, and desperation. Deut. 28. 28.

His arrows shall stick fast in them, and his hand shall press them sore; there shall be *no health in their bodies, because of his displeasure*; *nor any rest in their bones by reason of there sin.* Psal. 38. 2.

The iniquity of their heels shall take hold upon them; *the terrours of death shall compass them about, and the flouds of their ungodliness shall make them afraid.*

Every man that sees me, shall slay me, said cursed *Cain*: *my punishment is greater than I can bear*: *I have slain a man in mine anger, and a young man to my wounding.* Gen. 4. 14.

If Cain shall be avenged Gen. 4. 23.

venged ſeven fold, ſurely Lamech ſeventy times ſeven. Hearken unto me, ye wives of Lamech.---

They ſhall be weary of life, and wiſh for death; and haſten ſometimes to break off their torments by tragical and fearful ends: *Fall thou upon me, and ſlay me*, ſaith deſparing *Saul*; *Behold anguiſh is upon me, becauſe my life is whole in me: Away with the wages of iniquity*, cryed deſpairing *Judas*; and he betook himſelf to the fatal halter and the tree.

1 Sam. 31. 4.

3. Yet all theſe are to the finally impenitent but *the beginnings of ſorrow*; the *præludium* to thoſe unutterable miſeries, which are eternal; to *the worm which dyeth not*, to *the fire which never ſhall be quenched*, to *utter darkneſs*, and *everlaſting burnings*.

ings. For *they go down quick into hell.*

As it is with perſons, ſo it is with Nations, when *their iniquitie is full*; when once they have *filled up the meaſure of their abominations*; if none of all his methods will bring them to repentance; if they will not humble themſelves; if they will not fear, if they will not turn from their evil ways, he will *ſet his face againſt them to deſtroy them.* Jer.44.11.

He will pour out blindneſs upon them alſo, and *the things belonging to their peace* ſhall be *hid from their eyes:* He will *do to them as he did to Shilo*; he will take away their light; he *will come quickly, and remove the candleſtick out of its place.* Jer.7.12.

He will give them over to the

career, and swinge of their abo-
Hos. 4.17. minations: *Ephraim is joyned to idols, let him alone.*

Though it be with violence to his nature, though it be with reluctancy to his inclination (*O*
Hos. 11.8. *Ephraim; how shall I give thee up O Ephraim!*) yet their numbers shall not defend them, their privileges shall not excuse them from destruction,

Jer.22.29. *Though Coniah were as the signet upon my right hand, yet would*
Jer.31.20. *I pluck thee thence.* Though *Ephraim is his dear son*; though
Hos.5.4. *Israel be a pleasant child*; though *Judah is a pleasant plant*; yet if they will not frame their doings to turn unto the Lord, therefore *shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquities, and Judah also shall fall with them.*

Ezek.14.20. *Though Noah, Daniel, and Job*

Job were there, they ſhall deliver neither ſon nor daughter, but their own ſouls only.

For unnatural and extraordinary rebellions, he hath ſupernatural and extraordinary judgements: The *windows of heaven were opened*, the cataracts were poured forth, and drowned the old world. Fire deſcended, and brimſtone came down from heaven, and conſumed the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*. *The earth, opened, and ſwallowed up Dathan, and covered the congregation of Abiram.* Pſal. 160. 17. The Sun ſtood ſtill, till *Joſhua* was avenged of the Lords enemies. The *ſtars in their courſes fought againſt Siſera.* Jud. 5. 20.

For the uſual, and ordinary impenitency of Nations, he hath his three fold national ſcourge, his judgements in ordinary; *The famine,*

famine, the peſtilence, and the ſword.

Sometimes he *breaks the ſtaff*
Ezek. 4. 16. *of bread; and they ſhall eat bread by weight and with care; and they ſhall drink water by meaſure, and with aſtoniſhment; that they may want bread and water, and conſume away in their iniquity.*

Their ſeed ſhall be rotten under the clods, their garners deſolate, their barns broken down;
Joel 1. 17. *their beaſts ſhall groan, their cattle ſhall be perplexed; the flocks of ſheep ſhall be made deſolate.*

They ſhall *eat their children of a ſpan long; they that did feed delicately*, ſhall *be deſolate in the ſtreets*; they that were
Lam. 4. 5. *brought up in ſcarlet, ſhall imbrace dunghils.*

Some-

Sometimes he ſends forth his Plague κατ' ἐξοχὴν, the raging and the noiſome peſtilence, *the peſtilence that walketh in darkneſs*, *the plague that deſtroyeth at noon day.* Pſal. 91. 6.

He ſcatters infection like *lightning*; he caſts forth his Contagion, and *tears them in a moment*; *he ſhoots his* poyſon'd *arrows*, *and conſumes them.* Pſal. 144. 6.

Sometimes he gives commiſſion to the ſword to revenge the quarrel of his covenant, by inteſtine rebellions, or forreign invaſions.

He ſuffers a fawning *Abſalom* to *ſteal away the hearts of the people* from their Sovereign; or a curſed *Sheba* to *blow a trumpet*, and cry, *To your tents, O Iſrael.* 2 Sam. 15. 6. 2 Sam. 20. 1.

He

He permits a ſpirit of giddineſs, of fears and jealouſies, and of fanatick wildneſs to inrage whole Nations, to tear the womb that bare them, to *deſtroy them, and their king.*

He cauſes *nation to riſe againſt nation, and kindom againſt kingdom:* He calls in *the families of*
Iſai. 10.5. 7.15. *the North,* he *hiſſes for the Aſſyrian, the rod of his anger.*

Luk. 19. 43. *Behold* (ſaith our Saviour) *the day is coming, when thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſs thee on every ſide.* Then all things ſhall be filled with plunder, and confuſion, and *garments roll'd in bloud.*

Her ſtately Palaces, her goodly Temple ſhall be deſtroyed. *The*
Eſa. 34. 13, 14. *thorns ſhall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortreſſes thereof, and it ſhall be an*

in-

inhabitation for dragons, and *a court for owls*: --- *The ſatyre ſhall cry to his fellows*; the *owle*, and the *vulture to his mate*: *the ſcrichowle ſhall make its neſt there. Faunes and ſatyres ſhall dance there.* Eſa. 13. 21.

Babylon is fallen, it is fallen! Jeruſalem is a place for dragons! Behold the reward of obſtinate, and final impenitency; behold the portion reſerved for the perſons in the Text.

When neither intereſt nor ingenuity, judgements nor mercies could work upon them; when ſix Angels could not convert them; nor ſix Trumpets awaken them; nor ſix Judgements ſubdue them; nor ſix preſervations allure them to repentance.

Then

Then *John beheld, and he ſaw another mighty angel, cloathed with a cloud; and he ſet his left foot upon the earth, and his right foot upon the ſea; and he cryed, as when a lyon roareth; and he lifted up his hand to heaven, and ſware by him that liveth for ever ---- That there ſhall be time no longer.*

Apoc. 10. 1,2,6.

AP

APPLICATION.

I Have now done with the perſons in the Text, and the obſervations ariſing from them. Suffer me for a word of Application, humbly to pray that ye will come near, and conſider the things that have been ſpoken.

That ye will ſearch the Scriptures, and ſee whether it be as you have heard, or no; that you will ponder the matter, and weigh the concernment of it; that ye will not hear it as a ſong, or ſlightly paſs it by. *Is it nothing unto you, O all ye that paſs it by?*

I shall not undertake to make a precise Interpretation, or Application of this Vision of the seven Angels, and seven Trumpets; I know the destiny of the bold expositors of the *Apocalypse*. *He frustrateth the tokens of the lyars, and maketh diviners mad.*

Isai. 44. 45.

The Vision indeed speaks of Angels and Trumpets, Gods Messengers, and his loud alarms; of plagues and preservations, of a remnant kept alive. It tells of extraordinary thunder and lightning; of blasting of grass, and of trees; of the death of hoves and cattel; of part of the Sea turned into bloud; of mountains of fire cast into the Sea, and a third part of the Ships destroyed: Of two unusual Stars or Comets; of smoak

ſmoke iſſuing from the bottomleſs pit (it may be groundleſs fears and jealouſies) of *Locuſts*, which ſometimes are ſaid to *have no king*; but in this place to have *Abaddon*, or *Apollyon* for their King: It tells us of men killed by fire, and by ſmoke, and by brimſtone (by gunpowder.)

Yet all theſe things ſhall not extort from me a literal and particular Application of this Viſion to our ſelves: I know there are many things which cannot; I truſt the ſad Cataſtrophe ſhall not be ſo applyed.

However methinks it may be lawful in a general way to quicken my ſelf, and all that hear me, to examine our ſelves, touching the conſiderations laid

before us in reference both to our personal, and our national concernments.

Is there any one person that hears me this day, upon whom God hath not called aloud, and often that they would repent? with whom he hath not contended sundry ways, and in divers manners to turn them from the evil of their ways? By powerful instructions, and personal experiences; by signal mercies, and wonderful deliverances; by checks of conscience; by happy diversions, and wholesome disappointments; by a well-timed sickness; by *the wind*, which *bloweth where it listeth,*

Joh. 3 8. *and thou hearest the sound thereof, and knowest not whence it cometh.*

For

For God speaketh once, yea Job 33. 14.
twice, though man perceiveth it not: In a dream, in visions of the night. Is there any man so stupid as not to have considered national invitations to repentance? the Angels and the Trumpets, the warnings of Gods Ministers, the loud alarms of his Providence, the interchanges and intermixtures of National mercies, and National judgements, which we have had?

Since the day that he brought Jer. 7. 25.
our fathers out of Egypt, his Book hath been opened, his *Trumpet* hath *given a certain sound*; he hath sent his Messengers *rising every day, and sending them.*

The Lord gave the word, great were the company of the Psal. 68. 11.

Preachers, precept hath been
Isai. 28. 10. *upon precept, line upon line.*
Hath any Nation had the experiences which we and our fathers have had? Enquire from one end of the heaven to the other.
Psal. 101. 1. *My song shall be of mercie, and judgement.*
Concerning Gods own people once we read of it as a wonder,
Judg. 3. 11. that *their land had rest forty years.* Twice forty years together God was pleased to deliver the land of our Nativity from forreign invasion, and domestick rebellion.
Heb. 11. 34. He *put to flight the armies of the aliens*; he scattered the *Armada's* that called themselves invincible; *The virgin the daughter of Sion, laughed them to scorn*;
Isai. 37. 22.
Deut. 28. 7. They *came forth one way, and returned*

turned seven: He disappointed the insolent invader; he said, *he shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it*: *The horse, and his rider were thrown into the sea.* Isai. 37. 33. Exod. 15. 1.

He disappointed the plots and stratagems of domestick traytors: *the gates of hell* could *not prevail*; he suffered not their devilish machinations to succeed.

Peace and plenty, and the publick profession of the true Religion flourished; there was *no decay, no leading into captivity, no complaining in our streets.* Psal. 144. 14.

No! but there was *pride, and idleness, and fullness of bread*; *the sins of her ancient sister Sodom*; Ezek. 16. 49.

the cry thereof went up to heaven, and ſuddenly we taſted of the fire of *Sodom*, and the brimſtone of *Gomarrha*.

The bottomleſs pit was opened, and the ſmoke aroſe of abſurd and groundleſs fears and jealouſies; and the Sun and the Moon were darkned by reaſon of the ſmoke. And there came out of the ſmoke Locuſts;

Rev. 9. 9. *Their faces were as the faces of men; they had breaſt-plates of iron; their ſound was as many horſes running to the battel: They had a king, which is the angel of the bottomleſs pit, in Hebrew Abaddon, in greek Apollyon.*

Twenty years the Nation lay under the dreadful ſcourge of war and confuſion; the moſt horrible kind of war, the

the moſt lamentable of confuſions.

The fire came out of the bramble, and conſumed the cedars of Lebanon; The anointed of the Lord was taken in their pits; the breath of our noſtrils, our king, and our princes were among the gentiles. The law was no more; the prophets received no viſion from the Lord. Hunted we were from form to form; *emptyed from veſſel to veſſel*; ſcattered like *the bones*, which *the prophet ſaw in the valley*, which were *very many, and very dry.* Jud. 9. 15. Lam. 4. 20 Lam. 2. 9. Jer. 48. 11. Ezek. 37. 1.

When behold another interchange of providence, ſudden and wonderful! *There was a noiſe, and behold a ſhaking, and the bones came together; bone unto his bone: loe! ſinews and fleſh*

came upon them, and the skin covered them: they were restored as at the first breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, and were a great army.

Five years are not compleated since we are tryed again by such a miraculous restitution; indeed by an absolute resurrection.

And now since that time how various have been the mixtures, how quick and sudden have been the changes of his providence?

Luc. 13. 7. Three years he *expected fruit of his* barren *fig-tree*; he let it alone the fourth also, saying, *If it bear fruit, well*; and *if not*, he seemed to say, *I will cut it down.*

He called a destroying Angel; he put a new sword into his hand

hand, and with it a commiſſion to kill, and to deſtroy his thouſands, ten thouſands, hundred thouſands.

Who can expreſs the horror of his execution, the terrors and conſternations of them that did eſcape, the various complications of anguiſh and miſery, torments and deaths of them that fell in the execution?

How did the city become ſolitary that was full of people? ſhe ſate as a widow, her children forſook her, her friends fled away from her, her ſtreets were deſolate, her houſes were full of the noiſome careaſes of the ſlain. Lam. 1. 1.

O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the ſlain of the Jer. 9. 1.

daughter

daughter of my people.

And now again, behold another interchange, the goodneſs as well as the ſeverity of God, *towards them that fell ſeverity, towards us goodneſs, if we continue in his goodneſs.*

Rom. 11. 22.

He hath mingled mercy with his judgements; he puts the experiment to the utmoſt to try if *yet* we will repent.

He hath not ſuffer'd us *to fall into the hands* of man; not given us over into the hands of our inſolent and barbarous enemies. He hath given victory to the King; he hath wonderfully preſerved the perſon of his Royal Highneſs; he hath kept our Ships and Navies from deſtruction.

In a marvailous way of mercy he

he hath ſheltered our moſt gracious Soveraign, and his Royal Relations, and his whole Train and Family. Thoſe noble and eminent perſons both of Church and State, who to make themſelves a ſtay and comfort to the poor and infected of the City, cheerfully and conſtantly expoſed themſelves to danger, he hath *deliver'd from the ſnare of the hunter, and from the noiſome peſtilence.* He hath given plenty.—And laſtly, he hath cauſed the deſtroying Angel to ſheath his ſword, and ſtay his hand. And we are met together a preſerved remnant of men, that have not been killed by theſe plagues.

What ſhall we render?— Pſal. 116. 12.

O that men would therefore Pſal. 107.

praiſe

praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and declare the wonders that he doth for the children of men.

Let us repent therefore, and turn from our evil ways; let us do no more fooliſhly, *leſt a worſe thing come unto us.* We have ſeen the danger of Impenitency, after ſo many Motives to Repentance.

Behold now *wiſdom cryes* unto us, *and utters her voice* in this great and noble Congregation: *How long ye ſimple ones will ye love ſimplicity, and ye ſcorners delight in ſcorning? Turn ye, turn ye at my reproof; for why will ye dye, ye houſe of Iſrael?* Prov. 1. 22

Never let it be ſaid of us, which is here ſpoken of the perſons of

of the Text, that *the reſt of the men, which were not killed by theſe plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands.*

FINIS.

A

SERMON

AGAINST

Ingratitude:

Preached at

WHITE-HALL,

(Soon after the great Plague)

By

SETH then Lord Bishop of *EXON.*

LONDON,

Printed by *E. T.* and *R. H.* for *James Collins,*
at the *King's-arms* within *Ludgate,*
near *S. Paul's, 1672.*

UMI

Note, that the Sermon againſt Ingratitude ought to have been placed before that of Repentance.

A

SERMON

AGAINST

Ingratitude.

DEUT. 32. 6.

Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise?

These words are part of a Song made by *Moses*, and both the song it self, and these particular words are so very considerable, that I should think it a disrespect put upon the judgments of a venerable intelligent auditory, to be very laborious in gathering arguments to perswade

your attention to them: the matter, the antiquity, the penman, do all render it considerable.

For as for the subject matter of the song, it contain in it (as the Hebrew writers have observed) a summary of the law, or pentateuch of *Moses*.

Consider it as a piece of Antiquity, there is hardly any poem so venerable: it was written before *Homer*, or *Hesiod*, *Orpheus*, or *Linus*, *David's* or *Asaph's* poems; and except a piece of the same hand, it is the most antient song, that is extant in the world.

It was penn'd by one of the most considerable persons: look upon him humanely, and he was very remarkable, for his abstruse learning; (*He was learned in all the learning of the Egyptians*) Act. 7. 22. for his military conduct; for his policy

policy in administration of Government; for his felicity in giving a law so suitable to the genius of the people; that after so many thousand years it alone of all antient laws continues in veneration to this day.

But if we look upon him in reference to God, there was none like unto him; he conversed with God face to face; he was admitted to his secrets, he was entrusted with the administration of his powers in signs and wonders, in the sight of *Egypt*, and of *Israel*. It was inspired and dictated not by the Muses, or *Apollo*, but by God himself. *Write thee this song*, and *he wrote this song the same day* whilest he was yet *Deo plenus*; before the divine *afflatus*, before his transport and rage had left him: and therefore although Deut. 32. 19. v. 22.

he was the meekest, and most modest man upon the earth; although he resolutely declined his Embassy (still God was angry) because he was *but eloquent, but of a stammering speech*, yet now being conscious of that Spirit, which inlarged within him, he commends and justifies this song; he undertakes for the fluency, and smoothness, and the exuberance of it; he summons the tribes to record the expressions of his rage; he calls upon heaven and earth to hear the verses made by indignation, by his indignation kindled and conceived by the contemplation of the greatness and excellency of God, and his goodness to his dealings with his people of Israel, and of the unworthiness of their returns. *Give ear, O heavens, and I will speak;*

Exod. 4. 10.

Deut. 31. 30, 32.

and

and hearken O earth to the words of my mouth, my doctrine ſhall drop as the rain, &c.

The ſong indeed it ſelf is large and very ſatyrical; but the great argument or burthen of it is in the words of my text; *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh people and unwiſe?*

The words are (as I ſaid) the burthen or argument of the ſong applicable to every part of it, repetible at the end of every ſtanza, and indeed of every period.

God is a rock, his work is perfect, his ways are judgment: They have corrupted themſelves, they are ſpotted, perverſe, and crooked: Do ye thus requite the Lord?

But more particularly, God hath been good to *Iſrael*, he

raiſed him from nothing, he redeemed him from bondage, he was his Protector, his Guide, his Proveditore, his food was of the moſt delicious, his drink was generous, of the *pure blood of the grape*, and *he grew fat* upon it--- *But* Jeſhurun *waxed fat and kicked*: Do ye thus requite, *O populе ingrate* (עם נבל)?

Again; well; but will God endure this baſe ingratitude? doth he not ſee it, or not reſent it? doth it not move him? can he not, will he not revenge himſelf upon them? Yes, *the Lord ſaw it, and was moved to Jealouſie; a fire was kindled in his anger. Do ye thus requite the Lord, O fooliſh people and unwiſe?*

This is the Intereſt, which theſe words have in the ſong; and they conſiſt of two general parts: 1. An

1. An expostulation; *Do ye thus requite the Lord?*

2. A censure; *O foolish people, and unwise.*

The former of these needs no explication, being an ardent and vehement exprobration of the ingratitude of this people; wherein every word is weighty, and very Emphatical. The manner of the retribution, the parties Requiting and Required. Ye men! Ye men of *Israel*! do ye make such a requital? such a requital to the Lord?

To requite evil for good among Equals is against the light of the sons of *Noah*, and much more against the light of *Israel*. But for *Israel* after their instruction, and their experiences to do despight to the great and the gracious, and the terrible, jealous

lous and avenging God, it implies so much ingratitude, and so high a degree of wickedness, and madness as is not to be measured. And therefore he doth not attempt to delineate or describe it, but like one astonished at it, he expostulates with them in a vast abrupt Interrogation; *Do ye thus requite the Lord?*

But now the latter general part, which contains the censure of them, may perhaps require a little explication: Foolish and Unwise may possibly seem to some to have a little flatness in it, and tautology.

Here therefore we must betake our selves to the Original, and there we shall find a considerable difference, betwixt the notions of those two words, which are thus translated. The

The words for *Unwise* is [נבר] which signifies, that they were imprudent, and acted against their interest and concernment.

The words translated *foolish people*, are [עם נבל,] *Ingrate populo*, signifying base unworthiness, and perverseness. *Interlin.

They were *Am Nabal*, such for a people, as *Nabal* (afterwards) for a man. Now concerning *Nabal* the Scripture tells us, that the Character of his person was answerable to the notion of his name; *As is his name, so is he; Nabal is his name*, נבל שמו *silitas cum eo*, Interlin. *Dedecus cum ipso*, Syriac. 1. Sam. 25. 25.

A base, unworthy, dishonourable person; churlish and evil in his doings; surly and morose; such a man of *Belial*, v. 3.

that

v. 17. v. 10, 37, 38 v. 21. that one might not ſpeak to him; Inſolent, and, as ſuch perſons uſe to be, cowardly, and dead hearted, a drunken, ſtupid, ſottiſh, and, to ſum up all, an ungrateful wretch, that requited evil for good. This was the Character of *Nabal*, and this the *folly bound up in the heart of* the *Children* of *Iſrael*; ſo that there is no tautology in the text: The firſt word ſignifies the Wickedneſs, the ſecond the imprudence of *Iſrael's* Requital. And theſe are the things, which I am to ſpeak of.

I. *Iſrael's* requital towards God; implyed in the expoſtulation; *Do ye thus requite?*

II. The Wickedneſs } of that
III. The Imprudence } requital.
preſſed in the cenſure.

IV. Application.

1. Requital

1. Requital is a word of a reciprocal notion, it signifies a return made for something done: And to set forth *Israel*'s requital to the Lord, we are to consider 1. Gods dealings with *Israel*, and 2. *Israel*'s return to God.

1. Of the former we have various instances in the following words. God hath prevented them with Grace, and favour; and followed them { 1. Made. Fathers / 2. Bought / 3. Established } them with mercy and loving-kindness.

He contrived advantages for them before their Original; he designed them great, and glorious privileges long before they had any being. The Scripture computes their Original from *Jacob*, who was called *Israel* (A *Syrian*

Gen. 25. 23. *Syrian ready to perish was their Father;*) but long before *Jacob's*
Deut. 32. 8. time, *The most high divided to the Nations their inheritance; when he separated the Sons of Adam, the Lords portion was his people, and Israel the lot of his inheritance. He chose Jacob for himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure; before* Jacob or Esau *had done good or evil:* he chose them, because he loved them; to shew his prerogative, and manifest his absolute Sovereignty.

Gen. 15. 5. When *Abraham* was an hundred years old, and *Sarah* ninety, and they had no child betwixt them, he contracted with *Abraham* both for their being and their inheritance. He brought him forth, and said: *Look toward Heaven, and tell the Stars,— so shall thy seed be.* And

And the same day he said, *Unto thy Seed* (yet in *Idea*) *have I given this land from the River of Egypt to the great River Euphrates.* v. 18.

So that he was their Father, and maker in a peculiar manner, even as if from stones he had raised children unto *Abraham.*

Seing that from one, and him as good as dead, there sprang so many as the Stars. Heb. 11. 12. Deut. 10. 22.

Nay far more than the Stars which *Abraham* could see, when he looked up into the Sky; the number of all the Stars visible to the naked eye upon all the various positions of the Sphere, not exceeding eleven hundred; whereas there were numbred of this people at one time 603550 fighting men above twenty years old, beside the tribe of *Levi*, and

and beſide women and children.

As was their firſt creation, ſuch was their conſervation and propagation, inſtances of the united forces, of the goodneſs, wiſdom, and power of God, *when he ſaw them in their blood, he ſaid unto them, Live; when he found them in the howling wilderneſs, he kept them as the apple of his eye.* He protected them from all the ſtorms, which paſſed over them (*when they paſſed through the water, when they went through the fire*) he provided for them when there was famine in their land. In a prodigious way of mercy he made uſe of their own wickedneſs, and turned it to their preſervation. When they ſold *Joſeph* into *Egypt*, *Joſeph* ſaith, *God ſent him to preſerve them*

Ezek. 16. 6.

Deut. 32. 20.

them a posterity and to save their lives: (ye thought evil against me, but God meant it for good.) He sent them down into *Egypt* for their preservation; he preserved them there 430 years; and when the *Egyptians* were turned against them, *the more they were afflicted, the more they multiplied and grew. Doubtless he was their father*, though Abraham *was ignorant of them, and* Israel *knew them not: for in their affliction his bowels sounded towards them.* Gen. 45. 7. Gen. 50. 20. Exod. 1. 12. Esay 63. 15, 16.

And 2. he was their Redeemer as well as their Maker; *he bought them*; for so saith the text קנה *possedit, acquisivit eos, (i. e. asseruit in libertatem.)* When by the rigour of the Egyptians their lives were bitter, God heard their groanings, and he remembred the Covenant made with *Abra-*

Gen. 15. 13. *ham*, and his prediction that *they should serve and be afflicted* 400 Exod. 2. 24. *years*; *and that then he would judge that nation whom they should serve. Surely I have seen*, Exod. 3. 7. saith he, *the affliction of my people; I have heard their cry, I know their sorrows, and I am come down to deliver them: He sent Redemption to his people by the hand of* Moses *and* Aaron.

He gave Commission, and Power, and Command to *Moses*, to make known his Omnipotence and his favour to his people, and his vengeance upon their enemies; & they wrought a train of mighty signs and wonders in the land of *Egypt* for their deliverance. Exod. 14. ult. *And all* Israel *saw the great works which the Lord did upon* Pharaoh *and his host, and they sang with* Exod. 15. 1. Moses *that* ἐνίκησον, *He hath triumphed*

phed glorioufly, the horſe & his rider hath he thrown into the Sea, for he brought forth his people with joy, becauſe he had a favour for them.

3. He was not their maker and their redeemer only, but their eſtabliſher; *he perfected deliverance*, and followed them with all things perteining unto life and godlineſs: He was their conductor in the wilderneſs; *in the day time he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a pillar of fire*: He was their Protector, *As an Eagle flutters over her young ones and ſpreads abroad her wings, ſo he ſtretched out his everlaſting arms for their defence; he ſuffered no man to do them wrong*, and *drove out the nations before them*: He was their provider of meat, drink and cloathes; *he ſmote the ſtony*

Pſ. 78. 14.

Deut. 32. 11.

Pſ. 78. 15. *rock and the waters flowed; he gave them Quails and Manna from Heaven ſo, that they did eat Angels food;* he led them 40 years in the wilderneſs, & in all that ſpace *their cloaths did not wax old upon them, nor their ſhooes upon their feet.*

Deut. 29. 5.

And laſtly, he was their eſtabliſher; formed them into a Church and State, and dictated to them laws for their perpetual eſtabliſhment; *he gave teſtimonies unto* Jacob, *and appointed a law in* Iſrael, a law written by the finger of God, delivered by the mediation of Angels. He *ſet before them life and death*; he *confirmed the Covenant made to their fathers*; he entred into a Covenant with themſelves; he *ſpake to them ſundry wayes and divers manners*; and finally to take away all pretences of ignorance or

or infidelity, he appeared often to their fathers by the name of *El-ſhaddai*; to *Moſes*, *by his name Jehovah*; to themſelves he *came down (in the ſight of all the people) upon mount Sinai*, he often filled the Tabernacle with his glory, and *the glory of the Lord appeared to all the people.* Exod. 19. 11. Num. 14. 10. Lev. 9. 23.

Theſe are ſome few inſtances of Gods dealing with this people. Now for their *requital* the Scripture tell us their behaviour toward *Moſes* and *Aaron* the inſtruments, and toward God himſelf the Author of all their mercies, of their deliverance. Many a time they murmured againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron* in *Egypt*, and in the wilderneſs: before they were out of *Egypt*, they quarreled at *Moſes* for attempting their deliverance: within three days after Exod. 14. 11. Exod. 15. 24.

their triumphal ſong they murmured at *Marach*: about ſix weeks after the whole congregation murmured again, and wiſhed, that they *had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of* Egypt: they murmured at their very *Manna*, and cried out *in remembrance of the fiſh that they did eat in* Egypt, *the Cucumers, and the Melons, the Leeks, and the Onions, and the Garlick*. When the ſpies returned from *Canaan*, they made a down right mutiny; *they ſaid one to another, Let us make us a Captain, and let us return into* Egypt.

Exod. 16. 3.

Numb. 11. 5.

Num. 14. 4.

They ſided with *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram* in their rebellion; and after the earth had opened and ſwallowed them up, they ſtill owned the rebels and adhered to the good old cauſe; *on the morrow all the congregation mur-*

murmured against Moſes *and* Aaron, *ſaying, Ye have killed the people of the Lord*: ſtill perſiſting in an opinion that they were Patriots and godly men. Numb. 16. 41.

But what do we ſpeak of *Moſes*, or of oblique and conſequential actings againſt God? the *Scripture* tells us of their ſtupidity and infidelity; *they underſtood not his wonders in* Egypt: *How long*, ſaith God, *will it be ere they believe me, for all the ſigns which I have wrought among them*? neither ſigns *among* them nor ſigns *upon* them could cauſe them to believe. He ſmote them for their unbelief, *and for all this they ſinned ſtill, and believed not for all his wondrous works.* It tells of their forgetfulneſs; *they forgot God their Saviour, which had done ſo* Pſ. 106. 7. Numb 14. 11. Pſ. 78. 32. Pſ. 78. 11.

great things for them; *they soon forgot his works*, and his wonders: of their falseness and treachery, *their heart was not set aright, their spirit was not stedfast*; when *he slew them they would seek him* for a while, but *they did but flatter him with their lips, and dissemble with their double hearts.* It *tells* of their base idolatry; *they changed their glory for the similitude of a calf*, yea, *they offered their sons and daughters unto devils*: of their pride and scornfulness; *they despised the pleasant land*: they were a provoking generation, a stubborn and rebellious nation. *How often did they provoke God in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desart? Many a time did he deliver them, but they provoked him with their Counsels.* He divided

Ps. 78. 37.

Ps. 78. 36.

Ps. 106. 24.

Ps. 78. 40.

divided the Sea for their paſſage, and clove the rocks for their ſuſtenance, and covered them with a Cloud for their protection, and they ſinned yet the more. *They tempted him, they ſpoke againſt him, they provoked him at the ſea, even at the red Sea: they turned back and tempted God, and limited the holy one of Iſrael.* In one word; they were a rebellious houſe, a ſtiff-necked people; they kept not the Covenant which themſelves had made; they would none of his precepts, they deſpiſed his promiſes, and his threatnings; *their neck had an Iron ſinew, and they had a brow of braſs.* Ezek. 44. Pſ. 78. Is. 48. 4.

This was their behaviour, even then when Gods miracles were freſh, and *Moſes* was ſtill among them. And God foreſaw that after his deceaſe they would provoke

provoke him yet more. This was that requital, which ſtirred and inflamed the ſpirit of *Moſes*; and quickned him to that abrupt Expoſtulation, the firſt general part of the text, whereof I have hitherto been giving an account, *Do ye thus requite the Lord?*

You have ſeen ſome part of *Iſraels* ingratitude; it follows that we conſider the *Turpitude* and the *Imprudence* of this ingratitude, which gave occaſion for the cenſure here paſſed upon them, (O *fooliſh* people and *unwiſe*.)

II. And firſt of the *Turpitude* of their ingratitude, whereby it will appear that they were עם נבל Now to ſet forth the unworthineſs of their ingratitude againſt God in all the aggravations of it, it is a task too heavy for me (nay, even for Angels;) and *Moſes* when

when he was inſpired, and in the height of his rapture, did not attempt it; but making a chaſme, anddrawing a veil over that part, inſinuates it to be unexpreſſible. I ſhall not therefore offer at impoſſibilities, but follow the method, which the Scriptures have provided for us in like caſes. It is the manner of the Scriptures in things concerning God, which are incomprehenſible, to bait the mind, and train it on by exerciſing it in the Analogy of things familiar. The love *of God* to his choſen people is incomprehenſible; to give us therefore a little notion of it, the Prophet brings men to the conſideration of the love of a mother to her child; *can a Mother forget her Child* &c? The love *of Man* to God holds no proportion to his Excellency, and his

his goodneſs; and the heart in judging of it is obnoxious to miſtakes, and very deceitful; therefore the Apoſtle helps us towards an apprehenſion of it.

1 Joh. 4. 20. *He that loves not his neighbour, whom he hath ſeen; how can he love God, whom he hath not ſeen?* So ſeeing the turpitude of mens ingratitude towards God is ineffable and inconceivable, it will be requiſite to ſpeak a little of the unworthineſs of Ingratitude towards men, and leave you to work out this proportion; *Look how high the heaven is in compariſon of the earth*, ſo great, nay infinitely greater is the unworthineſs of ingratitude towards God.

And here I ſhall not go about to Philoſophize, or to demonſtrate the turpitude of ingratitude,

tude, from the nature of it, *à priori*. The immediate and evident corollaries of natural principles, admit only of jejune and inconsiderable reasonings in that kind of demonstration. The odiousness of ingratitude is such a corollary, naturally and immediately flowing from that universal maxim, *quod tibi fieri non vis*, &c. which runs thorow all morality; and is not only the last resolution of Philosophy, but of the Law and the Prophets, and of the Gospel. *Luke* 6. 31. As therefore, when an abstruse proposition in matter of speculation is resolved into an evident principle, or the contrary position into a plain absurdity, the demonstrator goes no further, but hath said all that can be pertinently spoken: so when a piece Matt. 7. 12.

of

of doubtful Morality is once reſolved into this grand abſurdity, *Omnia dixeris*, there is no more to be added, all the reſt is diminution.

It is ſaid that *Lycurgus* made no law againſt ingratitude, becauſe Nature had made one to his hand. So ſome Divines have obſerved, that there is no direct precept againſt ingratitude in the Scripture, though many teſtimonies in effect againſt it, becauſe it was needleſs, as being ſuppoſed from the light of nature, and below the Majeſtie of the ſpirit breathing in the Scriptures, to inſiſt upon it (according to that of our Saviour, *If ye love and do good, and lend to them that love and do good to you, what thanks, or reward have you? do not Sinners or Publicans even the ſame?*)

Prov. 17. 13.

Matt. 5. 48. Luc. 6. 32, 34.

ſame?) To that ſpirit which commands us to return good for evil, to love our Enemies, *&c.* it were a kind of whiffling to command the return of good for good, or prohibit the return of evil to thoſe that have obliged us. Now of theſe two ſorts of ingratitude, the *former* is branded in Scripture with an everlaſting brand, in the caſe of *Pharaoh's* Butler to *Joſeph*, the *Iſraelites* to *Jerubaal*, and the like: But the ingratitude in the text being of the *latter* kind, and of a deeper die, and becauſe the eaſieſt Criterion of turpitude is the deteſtation of all the ſons of men, I ſhall endeavour *à poſteriori* by ſome Scriptural inſtances of the reſentments of that kind of ingratitude, to ſhew the turpitude of it in the judgment of mankind.

Gen. 40. 23. Jud. 8. 35.

We

We read when *Joash* had commanded *Zachariah* to be ſtoned (who was the ſon of *Jehojada*, who had preſerved him in his minority from *Athaliah*, and made him King,) his own ſervants conſpired againſt him, and kill'd him in his bed, becauſe he remembred not the kindneſs of *Jehojada*, but ſlew his ſon. When *Abner* apprehended ingratitude in *Iſhboſheth*, whom he had made King, conſider his reſentment, he was very wroth, he ſaid, *am I a Dogs head, who do ſhew kindneſs to the houſe of Saul? God do ſo to Abner, and more alſo, except I tranſlate the Kingdome from the houſe of Saul*; He ſwore he would do it, and he did perform it.

2 Chron. 24.

2 Sam. 29.

2 Sam. 3. 8, 9.

It may be objected that the reſentment of theſe men was not ſo conſiderable, as that the Judgment

ment of Mankind ſhould be collected from it; thoſe that conſpired againſt *Joaſh* were *Zabad* the ſon of an *Ammoniteſs*, and *Jehozabad* the ſon of a *Moabiteſs*; and we read not any great praiſe, either of the piety or morality of *Abner*. Conſider then the reſentments of *Gideon*, of whom it is ſaid, *the Lord was with Gideon*, and of *David*, *the man after God's own heart*. When the men of *Succoth* dealt ungratefully with *Gideon*; he ſaid, that *he would tear their fleſh with the thorns of the Wilderneſs, and he took the Elders of the City, and the thorns of the Wilderneſs, and with them he taught the men of Succoth*, *i. e.* he taught them better Morals. Jud. 8. 7. 16.

When *Nabal* had (upon a good day, the ſhearers feaſt) refuſed

to give a little ſomething that ſhould come to hand, and put a ſcorn upon *David* (*who is* David, &c.) then *David* ſaid, *Surely in vain have I kept the goods of this fellow, and he hath requited me evil for good: ſo and more alſo do God to the enemies of* David, *if I leave of all that pertaineth to him before the morning light any that piſſeth againſt the wall.*

1 Sam. 25.

But it may be ſaid that theſe be men of war, and thoſe enraged, and theſe might be the reſentments only of their paſſions. Proceed we therefore to the reſentments of Prophets and righteous men; let us have recourſe from *David* the Captain to *David* the Prophet, and the Pſalmiſt (when he was compoſed, and when he was compoſing.)

Had

Had it been my open enemies then Pſ. 55. 12.
I could have born it; but it was
thou my friend, and my acquain-
tance; it was an act of *Treachery*
and *Ingratitude*; *let death ſeiſe* v. 15.
upon them, and let them go down
quick into hell. And again; *They* Pſ. 35. 12.
rewarded me evil for good; let
them be confounded, let them be as
the duſt before the wind, let their
way be dark and ſlippery, and the
Angel of the Lord perſecute
them. And; *Shall evil be recompenſed for* Jer. 18. 20.
good? (ſaith Jeremy) *I ſtood be-*
fore thee to ſpeak good for them,
and they have digged a pit for
my ſoul; Therefore deliver up
their children to the famine, and
pour out their blood by force of
the ſword, &c.

Briefly, becauſe it may be ob-
jected that all theſe were the re-

sentments of a legal, and Mosaick spirit, consider the resentment of the lamb of God, the son of man, the man Christ Jesus, when he denounced a woe upon *Corazin, &c. Woe unto thee* Corazin, *woe unto thee* Bethsaida; *for if the mighty works had been done in* Tyre, &c. *Therefore it shall be more tolerable for* Tyre *and* Sidon *in the day of judgment, than for thee.* Consider his resentment, when he pronounced a judgment upon *Jerusalem*; *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem; thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest those, that are sent unto thee; How often would I have gathered thy children—and ye would not. Behold now your house is left unto you desolate.*

Luk. 10. 13.

Luk. 13. 34.

From what hath been spoken of the resentments of men, the wickedness

ednes of *Israels* ingratitude against God, though it cannot be perfectly, yet it may in some measure be collected.

It remains that we consider the imprudence of it: *O fooliſh people and unwiſe.*

III. I may not, I need not inſiſt long upon this Argument. There are (as I conceive) but theſe five ſuppoſitions, which poſſibly might exempt them from the cenſure of the text. 1. If their God were like the gods of the heathen, and did not know their behaviour toward him. Or 2. If he were the God of *Epicurus*, and did not reſent it. Or 3. If they could eſcape from him. Or 4. If they could excuſe themſelves to him. Or 5. If they were able to ſupport themſelves againſt him. If none

of these were in the case, they will stand convicted of horrible imprudence; it will then be manifest, that they were a foolish people, and unwise. Of these things briefly.

1. Did not God know their behaviour? The Psalmist indeed tells of a brutish people, which wrought all manner of wickedness, and yet they said, *The Lord shall not see it, neither shall the God of* Jacob *regard it*: But, *O ye fools*, saith he, *when will ye be wise? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall not he see? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know? The Lord knoweth the thoughts of men. The eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth*, beholding the evil & the good. For, *the ways of man are before*

Ps. 94. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Zach. 4. 10.

Prov. 5. 21.

before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings. He penetrates all things, and searches all things. *If they say, peradventure the darkneſs ſhall cover them, then ſhall the night be turned into day: the darkneſs is no darkneſs with him, but the night is as clear as the day.* Pſ. 139. 11.

2. But it may be, though he knew their behaviour, yet he did not concern himſelf about them; it may be he did not much reſent their dealings with him; *Neither if they be righteous is he the better; neither if they be wicked is he the worſe. Thy wickedneſs may hurt a man as thou art, and thy righteouſneſs may profit the ſon of man; but if thou ſinneſt, what doſt thou againſt him; and if thy tranſgreſſions be multiplied, what doſt thou*

unto him? Nay but did not he concern himself for them? what meaned then *the sounding of his bowels* toward them? what mean such pathetical exclamations as these; *O that there were such an heart in them, that they would keep my Commandments always; that it might be well with them, and with their seed for ever.* Again, *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end. O that they had hearkened--what iniquity have they found in me?*

Deut. 5. 29.

Deut. 32. 29.

Did not he resent it, when they made the calf? He said, *Behold I have seen this people, and it is a stiff-necked people; let me alone, that I may blot out their name from under Heaven.*

Exod. 32. 9. Deut. 9. 13.

When they murmured; *I will come in the midst of them in a mo-*

a moment, and conſume them at once.

When they rebelled againſt *Moſes*; *Get you up from among them, that I may conſume them in a moment.* Num. 16. 25.

When they tempted him and queſtioned his power; *He heard it and was wroth, and greatly abhorred Iſrael. Many a time would he have deſtroyed them, had not Moſes ſtood in the gap to turn away his anger.* Pſ. 106. 40, 23.

3. But poſſibly for all this there might be ſome way to eſcape from him, and to conveigh themſelves out of the ſphere of his activity.

There have been thoſe, who have conceived the God of *Iſrael* to be a topical God; *a God of the mountains only*, and that the valleys were out of his 1 Kings 20. 23, 28, 29.

power

power and jurisdiction true; but because the *Syrians* said that he was not God of the valleys, he delivered them into the hands of *Israel*, who slew a hundred thousand foot-men in one day.

Nay but, *Behold the Heaven of Heavens cannot contein* the God of *Israel*; *he filleth all things. Shall they escape for their wickedness? Whither can they go then from his Spirit? or whither can they flee from his presence? If they could ascend into Heaven, he is there; if they could make their bed in hell, behold he is there!* Ps. 139. 7.

4. But though they cannot escape out of his reach, possibly they may plead something in excuse of their doings, which may mitigate his indignation; perhaps they were ignorant, that God

God was concerned, ignorant of his will, and of his ways, they had no inſtruction, they had no warning of their danger. But I ſay unto them, Had they no Caveats? *Take heed* (ſaith Moſes) *keep thy ſoul diligently, leſt thou forget the things, which thine eyes have ſeen. When thou ſhalt have eaten, and be full, then beware leſt thou forget the Lord thy God.* Deut. 4. 9. Deut. 8. 11.

Had they no memento's? How often doth God command them to bind his precepts, and his prodigies for a ſign, and a token, and a memorial upon their hands, for frontlets between their eyes; to write them upon their poſts, and their gates, to teach them their children, leſt they ſhould forget them? Exod. 13. 9. Deut. 6. 9. 11.

Did

Did they not know? *I call heaven and earth to record this day againſt you* (ſaith Moſes) *that I have ſet before you life and death, bleſſing and curſing.* Deut. 30. 19.

Had they no warnings of their danger? *If thou do forget, I denounce this day, that thou ſhalt ſurely periſh*; and this ſong was made to teſtifie againſt them. Deut. 30. 18.

Had they not heard? had they not ſeen? Yes, *that which had not been heard, and ſeen, ſince the foundation of the world from one ſide of the heavens to another. Did ever people hear the voice of God, ſpeaking out of the midſt of the fire, and live?*

They ſaw Thundrings, and Lightnings, Noiſe, Trumpet, Mountain ſmoaking, *Moſes* and *Aaron*, Exod. 20. Ex. 24. 9, 10, 11.

Aaron, *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the Seventy Elders, the Nobles, the People ſaw the Lord; *and the ſight of the glory of God was like devouring fire on the top of the mount, in the eyes of the children of Iſrael.* ſo that they were without excuſe.

5. And the only remaining conſideration is this; whether they were able to reſiſt the Lord, to ſupport themſelves againſt him, or at leaſtwiſe to endure the utmoſt of his indignation.

What is their hope, that they behave themſelves proudly, that they kick againſt the Lord? or wherein lies their confidence that they rebell againſt him? *Who art thou, O man, that ſtriveſt againſt God?* Canſt thou overturn immenſity, or circumvent

vent omniscience, or grapple with omnipotence? *The Lord is a man of war, great, and terrible is his name, who can stand before him, when he is angry?* Exod 15. 3.

Behold the Nations are as the drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing: all Nations are counted to him as Grashoppers, any less than vanity and nothing. Is. 40. 15, 22.

Where were they, when the foundations of the world were laid, and a line was stretched upon it? Can they command the thunder, or furnish out the lightnings, or bring to their assistance the stormy winds and tempests? Can they Marshal out the host of heaven, or put the Constel-

stellations in array, or command the stars in their courses to make resistance for them? *Can they bind the influences of* Pleiades, *or loose the bands of* Orion; *or bring forth* Mazzaroth, *or conduct* Arcturus *and his sons?* Job 38. 31, 32.

Are they able to stand before a jealous God; and to support themselves in the presence of a *consuming fire?* When *a fire is kindled in his anger, and shall burn to the lowest Hell, and shall consume the earth, and set on fire the mountains.*

Are they able to sustain the fierceness of his anger? Who among them can *dwell with the devouring fire?* who among them can *dwell with everlasting burnings?* Is. 33. 14.

Briefly, and plainly to lay the case before you; This people had

had heard with their ears of the drowning of the old world; Their fathers had told them of the fire and brimstone, which devoured the Cities of *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*; They had been witnesses of the plagues brought upon *Egypt*; They beheld the fire that consumed *Nadab* and *Abihu*; They stood by, when *the earth opened and swallow'd up Dathan, and covered the congregation of Abiram*; Thousands had fallen beside them, and ten thousands at their right hand for their ingratitude, and rebellion; and yet they behave themselves so as hath been represented. Judge in your selves, was it wisdome thus to requite the Lord? Were they, or were they not a foolish people, and unwise?

IV. We

We have now seen the case of *Israel*; the wickedness of their folly, and the folly of their wickedness hath been in some measure displayed before us. And who is it that doth not feel his indignation rise against this people? *Ah sinful people!* ah *people laden with iniquity!* ah *Seed of evil doers*! O ingrateful, stiffnecked, brutish nation! do they thus requite the Lord that made, that redeemed, that established them? *Shall not his soul be avenged on such a nation as this? Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered:* It is but just, and equal, *That he should consume them in a moment, and blot out their remembrance from under heaven.*

Nay! but *who art thou, O man, that judgest another, and dost the same things? thinkest thou that thou*

shalt escape the judgment of God? Alas! how easy is it in a figure to transfer all that hath been spoken to our selves, to our selves of this Auditory, to our selves of this Kingdome, in every capacity, private and publick, Ecclesiastical and Civil.

1. Hath not God dealt with us as he dealt with *Israel?*

2. Have not we requited him as they requited him? come now, and let us briefly reason together.

For Gods dealing, let us examine our selves upon the heads of enquiry here propounded by *Moses* in this song.

Hath he not { 1 made, 2 redeemed, 3 established } us in every sence and every capacity.

1. Hath he not made us? is not he

he the Creator and preſerver of every individual perſon? is not he the diſpoſer of nations? the ordainer and orderer of Governments? the framer of Churches in the world? In every one of theſe reſpects it is evidently true, which is delivered by the Pſalmiſt, *It is he that hath made us, and not we our ſelves, we are his people, and the ſheep of his paſture.* As for our perſonal being, and better being, was it not from him that we received our bodies, our Souls, our Chriſtianity *(all things pertaining unto life and Godlineſs?) His eyes did ſee our ſubſtance yet being imperfect, and in his book were all our members written. He poured us out like Milk, and curdled us like Cheeſe, cloathed us with skin and fleſh, fenced us with* Pſ. 100.3. Pſ. 139.16.

bones and sinews: he breathed into us life and spirit, saying unto us, Live: he stamped his Image upon us, and made us live the life of men; he commanded, and we were born of Christian Parents, and baptized, and regenerated into the life of Christians. *Hath* he not made us? Nay, *doth* he not make us, and that every moment, by sustaining and *upholding* our being *by the word of his power*; by reteining our spirits, and preserving our souls and life by his perpetual visitation, by his protection, and by his provision? *There is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retein the spirit.* All the wit and industry and ability of all men upon earth, nay of all creatures in Heaven and earth, cannot make one

Job 10. 12.

grain

grain of any one of that infinite variety of things, which are of neceſſity or of convenience to the being or preſervation of men. And this is ſo evident upon the ſhalloweſt conſideration, that S. *Paul* at *Lyſtra*, when the Prieſt of *Jupiter* (ſuppoſing him to be *Mercurius*) would have ſacrificed to him, appealed to this inſtance, as Gods witneſs againſt the depth of heatheniſh darkneſs. *He left not himſelf without witneſs in that he gave rain from Heaven, filling our hearts with food and gladneſs.* So that in this reſpect our caſe is parallel. Hath not God dealt with us as with *Iſrael*? Hath he not made us as to our perſonal and private condition? Act. 14. 17.

Again, if we conſider our ſelves in our national publick capacity

in reference to the political frame of our Government, Civil and Eccleſiaſtical, hath he not made us?

It was in reference to this that *Moſes* asked this queſtion; and to help their underſtandings in the conſideration of it for an anſwer, in the words immediately following he calls upon them to ſearch into their antiquities, to reflect upon their original, and their progreſs. *Remember*, ſaith he, *the days of old, and conſider the years of many generations. Ask thy Fathers and they will tell thee, thy Elders and they will ſhew thee.*

And now I ſay unto you, *Have you not heard long ago how he hath done it, and of ancient days how he hath formed it?* How he hath formed the ſtate of this Iſland,

Iſland, and reformed it; how he never gave over working, hewing, and fabricating the inhabitants thereof, till *he had framed them into a glorious Chriſtian Kingdom*, from *a moſt barbarous, ſavage, ſcattered, heathen people*. How oft did the Almighty Potter bring the ſtubborn matter to the wheel; *overturning, overturning, overturning?* To civilize the Britains he brought in the Romans, then tried the Britains again. When that would not frame to his hand, he brought in the Saxons, and upon them the Danes; then tried the Saxons again; and laſtly he brought in the Normans; nations of various tempers, cuſtoms, religions, languages; cauſed nation to riſe againſt nation, &c. he committed them

one with another, and among themſelves; he mixed and blended them by many a terrible combat and colliſion; he poliſh'd the roughneſs of them; by the leaven of the Goſpel he fermented and matured and ſweetned them, till by his powerful word light was brought out of darkneſs; out of a multitude of diſorders and confuſions ſprang forth a noble well-tempered form of Government & Syſtem of Laws Civil & Eccleſiaſtical, equal at leaſt to thoſe of any other people; harmoniouſly conſpiring (if duly executed) to conſerve all eſtates, orders, and degrees in the greateſt happineſs whereof any ſociety is capable; conducting us by the hand of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, and their ſubordinate Miniſters, to the great ends of the great ordinance

dinance of God in the world, and apt to enable and to diſpoſe well-minded men (by the means of grace, and motives to ſobriety, righteouſneſs, and godlineſs, which we enjoy) by peace and plenty, by liberty and proſperity (in all which we exceed all others) to produce effects of noble courage and magnanimity, ſuch as we read of in the ſtories of our Anceſtors; and of Piety, and Devotion in proportion anſwerable to thoſe of our glorious Predeceſſors (that is not inferiour in their kind to any nation in the world.) Surely *this* alſo *hath been of the Lords doing*, in reference to Society Civil and Sacred: it is he that hath made us, and not we our ſelves. Now let us paſs to the ſecond enquiry.

2. Hath he not *redeemed* us? and

that

that alſo in both capacities, perſonal and national.

1. For our perſons ſpiritually and temporally; hath he not bought our ſouls at a price; hath he not offered us a plenteous redemption by the blood of the everlaſting Covenant, redeemed us from the curſe of the Law, the bondage of Sin, the power of Satan, the wrath of God? Again, is there any one ſingle perſon to whom he hath not given many a temporal deliverance (known and unknown, or at leaſt-wiſe unconſidered?) Hath not he redeemed us from the priſon of the womb, from the hazards of our infancy, from the perils of our childhood, from the wildneſs and precipitancy of youth, from the ſnares and entanglements of our riper years?

Is

Is there any one whom he hath not redeemed *from ſix troubles and from ſeven*, in our bodies, eſtates, liberty, reputation? whom he hath not powerfully and frequently reſcued from the folly and perverſeneſs of our ſelves, from the malice of our neighbours, from the rage of Devils? Hath he not redeemed us in our perſonal capacities?

2. Hath he not redeemed our *nation* again and again, in all its intereſt civil and ſacred? Who elſe was it that delivered our fathers and our ſelves from Barbariſme and Idolatry, from Tyranny and Superſtition, from fanatical Anarchy, and Irreligion.

To omit former deliverances, can we forget how it is but a little while ſince the wrath of God

was

was poured out upon this Kingdome to the uttermoſt? ſince our Sun was turned into darkneſs, and our Moon into blood, our ſtars raviſht from their Orbs, the Royal father Martyred, the Son baniſhed, the Nobles confounded, the State diſſolved, the Church deſtroyed, our Religion, Laws, Liberty, Property, torn away; our bones were dryed, our hope was gone, and we thought we had been clean cut off. Then *when we cried unto the Lord in our trouble, he delivered us out of our diſtreſs: He ſent redemption to his people, he turned our captivity as the Rivers of the South; then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with Joy.* The Symptoms of joy and triumph were heard, and ſeen in all the corners of the land;

land; nay *the Sea roared, and the floods clapped their hands*, the hills and the heavens resounded because of the redemption; for *he cometh*, *for he cometh*-&c. And now I say unto you, hath he not redeemed us?

3. Hath he not established us? that is to say, the Estalishment, which we enjoy, is it not all from him? and hath not he done his part for our establishment? our spiritual and temporal, our private, our publick establishment?

Doth not the God of all grace continually press upon us the means of grace, calling us to his Eternal glory; endeavouring to make us perfect, to establish, strengthen, and settle us in his truth, to establish us in the faith, and in holiness, to strengthen

ſtrengthen our inward man, that we may be rooted and grounded and built up in him, to a lively hope, and an humble aſſurance of eternal life.

All ſpiritual Eſtabliſhment, is it not from God? is there any perſon within the verge of his Majeſties Dominions, for whom God hath not provided plentiful means fot this Eſtabliſhment?

Again, for our temporal private condition, is there any one of us deſtitute of ſome ſort of proviſion, ſubſiſtance; ſome ſort of ſettlement, or Eſtabliſhment? Is there any one that hears, or hears me not, for whom God hath not provided ſome honeſt way of Eſtabliſhment by donation of pious Founders and Benefactors, by legal deſcent, by voluntary

Deut. 6. 11. Bequeſt, (*houſes which they builded*

builded not &c.) by labour of the hand, or contrivance of the brain; by assistances of Alliances, or friends; by charitable benevolence, by the bounty of contingency or the like? Are not every one of these from the Lord? is any one destitute of one or more of these ways of establishment, or that can answer, that God hath made no provision for them? hath he not given us our temporal establishment?

Lastly, hath not God done his part towards a National and a publick establishment of this Church and Kingdom?

Hath he not in order thereunto resetled our gracious Sovereign in the throne of his Royal Predecessors? Re-established the Church upon its rightful Basis and

and foundation? Restored all orders and degrees to their legal rights, proprieties, privileges and liberties? Reinforced our Religion and our Laws in the due administration of Discipline and Justice? Reduced all things into that ancient frame and constitution, which had from many Generations derived happiness and glory to the people of *England*?

Finally, for preservation and continuance of all these, hath he not restored the actual strength of the Kingdom, our Forts and Castles, our stores and magazines, our Towns and Cities, our Armies and Navies, lately rescued out of the hands of rebellious Usurpers to those Royal hands, to which they do of right belong? In one word therefore to conclude this first enquiry, hath not God dealt

dealt with us as he did with *Israel*; hath he not *made* us, *redeemed* us, *established* us?

The next consideration ought to be, whether we have not so requited the Lord as they requited him. Whether our behaviour hath not been answerable to that of *Israel*, in reference both to the foolish part, and the unwise. And here alas! how clear and conspicuous is the parallel in respect of their { ingratitude, and imprudence.

Have we not dealt, do we not deal ungratefully with the Author and instruments of all our mercies? Have all Gods methods and various dealings with us prevailed so far as to bring our persons to repentance, or our Kingdom to a Reformation? Have we been convinced, or have

we not been hardened by his wonders, converted to his fears or sealed up into a sottish stupidity and senseless contempt of Religion, a spirit of Atheism, and downright infidelity?

Do we not murmur against *Moses* and *Aaron*? do not some amongst us still abet the cause of *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*? are not some of us ready to make them a Captain, and to return into *Egypt*?

Have we not soon *forgot God our saviour*? have we not *flattered him with our lips, and dissembled with him in our double heart*?

Do we not despise our very Manna; and wish again for the Garlick of *Egypt*? ready to change our glory for the Calves of *Egypt* or the confusion of *Babylon*?

bylon? In a word, are we not *a ſinful people laden with iniquity*, as ingrateful and Nabaliſtical as *Iſrael*, a fooliſh people?

Again, for matter of imprudence, wherewithal can we purge our ſelves from it? Doth not God know our miſcarriages alſo? doth he not underſtand us & our ways? and doth he not intereſt himſelf in us? doth he not reſent our provocations? can we eſcape for our wickedneſs? With what apologies ſhall we *come before the Lord, and bow our ſelves before the high God*? Have we had no caveats from the Miniſters of God, no warnings, no Alarms from God himſelf? have we not heard, have we not ſeen, hath it not been told us? The thunders, and the lightnings, the trumpets ſounding,

the mountain ſmoaking, the Angel deſtroying, the Sword devouring. Are we able to conteſt with a jealous God? are we ſtronger than he? are we able to tear him out of his Throne, or to deveſt him of his Thunder, or to ſtand the ſtorm of his fiery indignation? Have we not been a fooliſh people & unwiſe!

What then remains, but that God ſhould execute upon us the ſentence which we our ſelves have been ready to paſs upon the people in the text, that he ſhould do thus, and thus, unto us; that *he ſhould conſume us in a moment, and blot out our names from under Heaven?*

Nay, rather it remains (men and brethren) leſt he ſhould do thus, and thus, unto us, that we prepare to meet the Lord our God;

God; that we rouze up the ſpirit of our minds, and diſcuſs and ſcatter that Lethargic ſtupor that is upon us: *Awake, awake, Deborah; and ariſe, Barak, the ſon of Abinoam.*

Who can tell but God may yet have mercy upon us, may have mercy upon our ſouls, and ſpeak peace to our land!

When I ſay to the wicked, thou ſhalt ſurely dye; if he turn from his wickedneſs, and do that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die: he hath done that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſurely live. Ezek. 33. 14, 15.

Wherefore let every one of us examine himſelf and find out the plague of his own heart, and be deeply ſenſible of his own ingratitude; let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn again unto the

the Lord; let us make haſte to eſcape, before the decree bring forth, and we be ſurpriſed by the ſtormy wind and tempeſt; let us loſe no longer time, but make haſte *in this our day, before the things belonging to our peace are hid from our eyes.* Let ſpeaker and hearers (O let my ſelf and all this aſſembly, let every ſoul here preſent, let all the people of the land) *turn unto the Lord with all our hearts, with faſting, weeping, mourning.* And *let the prieſts* (my brethren) *the miniſters of the Lord, weep between the porch and the alter, and ſay, ſpare thy people, O Lord;* be favourable, O Lord be favourable; O Lord deal not with us after our ſins, nor reward us according to our iniquities, though we have thus requited the Lord, being a fooliſh people and unwiſe.

Joel 2. 12, 17.

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